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Q: What is this trip about?

Study human rights, Mayan cultural resilience, and strategies for sustainability in the context of Guatemala's complex and tumultuous history. In this 11-day seminar, we'll discover the roles that politics, history, culture, migration, and sustainability play in a society that recently came out of nearly four decades of civil war. We'll examine the vast legacy of the Maya, and explore cultural survival strategies in an economic reality where half the population lives in significant poverty and continue to struggle to overcome colonial legacies.

Highlights include visits to many communities in the Guatemalan highlands and a three-night homestay with a Mayan family as we explore grassroots efforts to recreate and nurture sustainable communities in the stunning Lake Atitlan region (including visits to Panajachel and Santiago Atitlan, among others). We'll also visit the incredible Sunday market in Chichicastenango, Antigua's colonial architecture and vibrant culture, and the bustling city life of Guatemala City. We'll meet with individuals and organizations from across Guatemalan civil society, including human rights activists, government officials, Mayan spiritual leaders, and a variety of NGOs working on efforts to improve the quality of life for women, children, victims of war and violence, and migrants, and creating pathways for nurturing and sustaining the cultural and ecological vitality of this incredible country. The style of this travel seminar is highly experiential with guided sessions for analysis and reflection.

For more detail, see the tentative itinerary linked from the course web page at <https://coloradomtn.edu/academics/study-abroad/guatemala/>.

Q: When is the trip?

We will depart from DIA on March 7th and return on the evening of March 17th, 2024.

Q: Who's organizing the trip?

The trip is a partnership between Colorado Mountain College and the Center for Global Education and Experience (CGEE), associated with Augsburg College in Minneapolis. You can get more details on CGEE programs at <http://www.augsburg.edu/global>

Social science professor Bob Gumbrecht is the instructor and CMC trip leader for this course. Bob has been at CMC for 19 years and is a seasoned study abroad leader, having taken students to Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Cuba, and Northern Ireland on many occasions. Professor Gumbrecht has a graduate degree in political science with an emphasis on Latin American politics and Central American political economy. Bob teaches courses in political science, history, and geography, and is affiliate faculty in the Sustainability Studies program.

Q: How much does it cost?

The trip fee is \$3000, which includes all program-related expenses while in Guatemala (meals, lodging, fees and honorariums, international travel health and cancellation insurance, and local transportation).

CMC tuition and other potential fees (such as passport fees or immunizations) are not included in the course fee.

Q: Is airfare included in the trip fee?

No, you will purchase airfare on your own. It is difficult to predict the cost of airfare far in advance, but we expect it to cost around \$400-\$600 (roundtrip Denver to Guatemala City). So that we all arrive together, you will be provided a flight itinerary to purchase as we get closer to the trip. If you choose to make alternate flight arrangements, we just ask that you arrive and are present in the Guatemala City airport by a specific day and time in order to facilitate gathering of the group and transportation to our first destination.

Q: When is the deadline to register and pay the course fee?

December 1, 2023 is the application deadline, with course registration and payment due (or payment plan initiated) by December 8, 2023.

Payment plans are available through CMC. These allow you to spread out the cost of your trip fee over several payments. *The earlier you apply, the more time you have to pay the trip fee.* Contact your campus student account representative for details. At the Steamboat campus, contact Patrick Gilliland at 970.870.4420 or pjgilliland@coloradomtn.edu.

Q: Is there any financial assistance available to help defray the travel costs?

See CMC's [Financial Resources for Study Abroad](#) site for details on CMC study abroad scholarships and other sources of financial aid.

Payment plans are available through CMC. These allow you to spread out the cost of your trip fee over several payments. *The earlier you apply, the more time you have to pay the trip fee.* Contact your campus student account representative for details. At the Steamboat campus, contact Patrick Gilliland at 970.870.4420 or pjgilliland@coloradomtn.edu.

Q: What if I need to cancel? Can I get a refund of the course fees?

Depending on the date of cancellation notice, refund of at least some of the course fees may be possible, according to cancellation/refund policies of our travel partner in Guatemala (see the next section on trip fee refunds).

Trip Fee: Cancellation notices for individual participants must be received by CGEE in writing. A cancellation notice received from an individual program participant up to 45 days before departure will be assessed \$250 plus any non-recoverable costs (i.e. hotel deposits, etc.). A cancellation notice received 30-45 days before departure will be assessed 25% of the total program cost OR all non-recoverable costs (whichever amount is greatest); a cancellation notice received 15-30 days before departure will be assessed 50% of the total cost. A cancellation notice received within 15 days of departure will be assessed the full program cost.

Airfare: Depending on the airline, airfare is generally nonrefundable, but many allow for future flight credit in case of cancellation.

CMC Tuition: Refunds are based on the course start date. See the course syllabus for details.

Q: What class do I register for and how much credit will I receive?

There are two options for students:

1. **PSC 1050: *Current Political Issues*** (3 credits). This course is appropriate for most students. This is a Guaranteed Transfer (GT) course and there are no course prerequisites.
2. **SUS 3910: *Field Experience in Sustainability*** (3 credits). Students enrolled in the Sustainability Studies program should register for this course.

You should only register for one of these courses.

If you are not interested in, or do not need, college credit for the trip, you should register for PSC 1050 and “audit” the class.

Q: What does the class include besides the trip?

In addition to the trip, we will have a mandatory pre-trip meeting (in person and Zoom if you are not in Steamboat) approximately two weeks prior to departure that will cover travel preparation and logistics, some background and preparation related to course themes, and plenty of time for Q&A with the instructor.

In addition, there will be some self-guided modules on Canvas to complete prior to and after the trip.

Q: Can I go if I am also taking other classes this semester?

Yes. This is a short-term course, and mandatory meetings will be few. Travel occurs mostly over CMC spring break.

Q: What do I need to do to participate?

1. First, **complete the short application form** available at <https://coloradomtn.edu/academics/study-abroad/guatemala/> and return it to Professor Gumbrecht at rgumbrecht@coloradomtn.edu. *Application deadline is December 1, 2023.*
2. **Register for the appropriate course** (*POS 1050: Current Political Issues* or *SUS 3910: Field Experience in Sustainability*) and pay the course fee (or begin a payment plan). *Registration and payment deadline is December 8, 2023.*
3. There will be **additional paperwork** to complete after registration, including an online application with our travel partners, a CMC participation agreement and liability waivers, enrollment in the U.S. State Department Smart Traveler program, and perhaps other items.
4. If necessary, **apply for a passport or renew** if it is about to expire. Apply for/renew a U.S. passport here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html/>
5. **CMC requires all study abroad participants to be vaccinated against Covid.** Be sure you have your Covid vaccination card in hand - CMC will verify your vaccination status and you may need it to enter Guatemala.

Q: Do I need a passport? What about health insurance?

You must have a valid passport (with an expiration date beyond six months after return) to participate in this course. Apply for/renew a U.S. passport here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html/>. Please be aware that it may take *at least* 4-6 weeks to receive your passport, so plan accordingly!

Travel health insurance is provided through our travel partner and is included in your course fee.

Q: What immunizations do I need to participate?

There are no required vaccines for this trip.

Check with your doctor or the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) regarding recommended vaccinations for travel to Guatemala. Visit the [Centers for Disease Control Guatemala Travel page](#) for details.

In Steamboat Springs, you can also visit the travel immunization clinic operated by the Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurses Association: 970-879-1632 or visit their [travel immunization page](#) for more details.

You should plan on getting your vaccinations at least 4-6 weeks prior to travel.

Q: Is there an age requirement to participate?

Students under the age of 18 will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and a parental release form will be required to participate.

Q: Do I need to know Spanish?

No. Spanish language is not required to take this course. Translation will be provided during all program-related activities.

Q: Is it safe to travel to Guatemala?

The U.S. State Dept. has determined that, overall, it is safe for Americans to travel to Guatemala, with some common-sense precautions. A few areas of the country are not considered safe for Americans to travel (due to crime), but we will not be traveling anywhere near these areas. Check out the [U.S. State Department's travel advisory for Guatemala](#) for more detail.

Our hosts in Guatemala are Guatemalan citizens and are long-time professionals in study abroad programs. They know the country well and have well-developed procedures to keep us safe and to deal with any emergencies should they arise.

Q: What do I need to bring? What should I wear?

As far as clothing and personal items, we will cover this in our pre-trip meeting.

**More questions? Please contact:
Bob Gumbrecht (970) 870-4484 / rgumbrecht@coloradomtn.edu**