



**Santa Clara
University**

CASA DE LA SOLIDARIDAD

PRE-DEPARTURE HANDBOOK

2009 - 2010

Su m m e r , S p r i n g , F a l l

International Programs Office
Santa Clara University
500 El Camino Real
Santa Clara, CA 95053
www.scu.edu/casa

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Welcome Message (Things to do immediately).....	3
Casa Mission Statement	4
Communication.....	5
Emergency Contacts.....	6
What to Bring.....	7
Local Currency.....	8
Planning Your Budget.....	9
Casa Resources.....	10
Program Timeline/Weekly Schedule	11
Orientation	12
Billing, Payment, Refund Policy	13

COURSE WORK LOGISTICS

Reading List.....	14
Credit / Units, Tuition, Course Load.....	14
Pass-No Pass Option.....	14

FOR YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY

CDC Vaccine Recommendations & Health Tips	15
Security and Safety.....	16
Behavioral Expectations	18
Guest Policy at the Casa	18
Alcohol & Drug Policies.....	18
Student Conduct Code	20

TRAVELING ABROAD

Travel Documents.....	23
Culture Shock.....	24
Final Thoughts.....	24

WELCOME

“If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. If you have come because your liberation is bound with mine, let us work together”

-Brisbane-based Aboriginal Educator

We are happy to congratulate you on being selected as a participant in *Casa de la Solidaridad*. The staff at the International Programs Office at Santa Clara University and our onsite staff at the *Casa de la Solidaridad* Program are ready to welcome you to your home in El Salvador. This information packet is designed to prepare you for your academic experience in El Salvador. Please read through the packet carefully to get a good understanding and awareness of your responsibilities in the coming days before your departure for El Salvador. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns. Welcome!

Things to do immediately:

1. Complete the CONFIRMATION form and send it back to the International Programs office with your \$500 deposit.
2. Set up your eCampus account at Santa Clara University.
3. Read this Pre-Departure Packet thoroughly.
4. Get your physical exam and return the MEDICAL FORM to SCU if you have not already.
5. Read and sign the updated SAFETY COVENANT and return it to SCU.
6. Begin the passport process if you have not already (see "Travel Documents" for more info).
7. Schedule/begin immunizations (see "CDC Vaccine Recommendations" in this packet).
8. Make housing arrangements for when you return to your home institution.
9. Purchase required texts (see "Readings List" in this packet). *Casa* does NOT have a campus bookstore where you can purchase these books once you arrive. You will need to purchase some additional texts / readings that are printed in El Salvador upon your arrival. Plan accordingly in your budget.
10. Give your parents / guardian the emergency contact numbers before you leave.

MISSION STATEMENT

“The search- for self, for wisdom, for love, for truth, for justice, for God - is strenuous and unending. We need good companions in order to persevere in it. In good company, in a community of conviction, the quest never loses its relevance, its urgency, or its savor.” - Kay Ashe, OP

The mission of the Casa is the promotion of justice and solidarity through the creation of a meaningful academic experience by integrating rigorous academic study with direct immersion with the poor of El Salvador. The program draws inspiration from the lives of the six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter who were murdered at the University of Central America (UCA) on November 16, 1989 and from all the people of El Salvador who suffered during the civil war, especially those who were killed in their struggle for solidarity and social justice.

We invite you to immerse yourself in the "classroom" of the people of El Salvador. Dedicated to fostering "men and women for others," *Casa de la Solidaridad* is a unique living and learning environment. Here you can develop your intellectual potential, strengthen your ethical and spiritual values, and learn to become a socially responsible global citizen.

OUR DAILY LIFE INCORPORATES:

Living in Community:

We choose to live in community in order to share with and learn from others.

Living Simply:

We choose a simple lifestyle, uncluttered by materialism, in solidarity with the marginalized of our world.

Focus on Learning with an Emphasis on Justice:

We choose to integrate rigorous academic study with the experience of the marginalized of El Salvador in the hopes of committing ourselves in the world to justice.

Cultural Sensitivity:

We choose to live in the context of another culture and context, honoring and learning from Salvadorans whom we are visiting.

Integrating Faith:

We choose to invite our spiritual journey into our daily experiences as we seek to understand the world with which we live.

Students are constantly invited to reflect on these components as the experience evolves. Weekly community and spirituality nights are an essential part of the program which provide space to reflect in an intentional and ongoing manner.

COMMUNICATION

Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion, is to take off our shoes for the place we are approaching is holy. Else we may find ourselves treading on another's dream. More serious still, we may forget that God was here before our arrival.

-Max Warren

By Phone

Students can buy international phone cards at stores in walking distance from the Casas. Rates are \$.07 / minute to call to the US.

By Mail

Mail can take from 1-2 weeks. Packages can be sent either PRIORITY MAIL or AIRMAIL. Priority mail usually takes about 7-10 days and air mail about two weeks. If someone is mailing a package, be sure all food is sealed; heat, moisture, postal employees, and insects can spoil contents. We do not advise sending anything valuable. Books, reprinted articles or cassette tapes qualify for an airmail printed matter rate - which is considerably lower than general airmail. Keep in mind that shipping packages is a lengthy process that can be insecure. There's a charge to receive packages larger than a large envelope.

***Summer Program: We recommend that students for the summer program NOT have packages sent as the duration of the program is short and often times packages do not make it before students leave.**

Your mailing address in San Salvador is:

STUDENT Name
Casa de la Solidaridad
A-179
Antiguo Cuscatlan
La Libertad
El Salvador
Central America

By E-Mail

There are Internet cafes in walking distance of the Casa. The cost for such services is about \$1/hour. Casa students also have access to a computer lab at the UCA at no cost.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Que quede constancia de que la voz de la justicia nadie la puede matar ya.

– Monsignor Oscar Romero, 24.02.80

It will be important to give your parent(s) / guardian(s) the emergency contact numbers at Santa Clara University and the Casa before you leave. Casa staff will be in regular contact with the Santa Clara University International Programs Office staff.

Santa Clara University

International Programs

500 El Camino Real

Santa Clara, CA 95053-0639

Ph. 408. 554.6940

Fax 408.554.2340

dgordon@scu.edu (Dennis Gordon, *Executive Director*)

bcolyar@scu.edu (Barbara Colyar, *Director of Study Abroad*)

vraatior@scu.edu (Vidalino Staley Raatior, *Assistant Director, Study Abroad*)

lajohnson@scu.edu (Lori Johnson, *Business Manager*)

Program Directors in El Salvador (Directors' Address)

Kevin and Trena Yonkers-Talz

A-179

Antiguo Cuscatlan

La Libertad

El Salvador, Central America

Telephones

Kevin and Trena Yonkers-Talz (home) 011-503-2273-3657

Kevin Yonkers-Talz (cell) 011-503-7753-5848

Trena Yonkers-Talz (cell) 011-503-7962-0009

Email

kyonkerstalz@scu.edu (Kevin Yonkers-Talz, *Program Co-Director*)

tyonkerstalz@scu.edu (Trena Yonkers-Talz, *Program Co-Director*)

La Casa de la Solidaridad (Student Homes)

Casa Romero - 011-503-2243-5550

Casa Silvia - 011-503-2243-1231

Casa Ita – 011-503-2243-2958

Your mailing address in San Salvador is

YOUR Name

Casa de la Solidaridad

A-179

Antiguo Cuscatlan

La Libertad

El Salvador, Central America

Program Coordinator/Community Facilitators

Cell Phone Community Facilitator #1 - 011-503-7099-4426

Cell Phone Community Facilitator #2 - 011-503-7968-3446

Cell Phone Community Facilitator #3 - 011-503-7756-5305

WHAT TO BRING

Passport & Extra Photos

Make sure that you travel with your passport, and also keep several copies of the first page (of information, with your picture) tucked in different places throughout your luggage in case of loss of passport. Leave a copy of the information with your parents or a trusted friend back home as well. Please also bring 2 additional passport-sized photos of yourself for use in completing documents when you get to El Salvador.

Weather & Clothing

The weather will be warm to hot (80-90). The rainy season generally runs from late May to early October. November, December, and January are usually cooler in the evenings, so be sure to pack a sweatshirt, sweater, or light jacket. In general, it is best to bring lightweight casual clothing with two or three nicer outfits for more formal meetings. Informal dress is fine, however shorts are usually restricted to leisure activities. Remember that the field placement is part of the curriculum and, therefore, you will need to dress appropriately for these days. Slacks and skirts are fine, but shorts and mini-skirts would not be appropriate. We ask that you leave behind military-style clothing (camouflage) and gang-style clothing. Women should avoid clothes that would attract unwanted attention such as revealing dresses, tube or tank tops (we'll talk more about this during orientation). Salvadorans make a significant effort to present themselves well and appreciate it when visitors do the same. Since we wash clothes by hand, we recommend bringing cotton / light clothing. Apart from whatever clothing and toilet articles you may need (you can buy such items in El Salvador, but they are more costly), we suggest bringing along:

Checklist

- Insect repellent
- Water bottle
- Text Books - look at "Reading List" included in this packet
- Extra disks or USB port (enough to store your semester's work) and lap top (this is optional – see "Computer Use" Pg. 10)
- Notebooks, pens, pencils (you can also buy these in El Salvador)
- Travel alarm clock
- Small flashlight & extra batteries
- Pepto-Bismol tablets, cold medicine, and allergy medicine if you have allergies
- Prescription medications
- Tissue packets (useful when toilet paper is unavailable)
- Swimming suit and towel
- Sun screen, sunglasses, hat
- Photos of your family
- Address book for writing friends and family
- Any music on Ipod or CD for reflection
- Small backpack for daily use (books, etc.)
- Comfortable bag / backpack for weekend travel / outings
- Safety belt or pouch (to keep money and passport safe while traveling)
- Spanish / English dictionary
- Light jacket for cool evenings
- Rain gear (poncho / umbrella) during rainy season (May to October)
- Umbrella (for sun and rain)
- Bathing items (towel/s, flip-flops, shampoo, soap, etc.)
- Purifying water tablets (enough to last for one week in rural El Salvador)

Please do NOT bring:

- Too many clothes – students wash all clothes by hand!
- Anything with too great of value as the less you have, the safer you will be
- Expensive jewelry, a lot of money, nice radios, etc.

LOCAL CURRENCY

The historical Salvadoran currency is called the colon and was exchanged at a fixed rate of 8.75 to one US dollar. However, as of January 2001, the Salvadoran economy has switched over to using the U.S. Dollar as their official currency.

ATM / Check Card

The easiest option for accessing your money will be with an ATM/credit card (the ones with the Visa, MasterCard, or other major credit card symbol). These can be used anywhere major credit cards are accepted and can also be used to withdraw cash from your account at an ATM machine. Please confirm with your bank that you will be able to access your money internationally as students have sometimes had trouble in the past accessing their money without prior notification to their bank. Many accounts require a 4-digit PIN to access the account internationally. Check with your bank.

Travelers Checks

Another option is to bring travelers checks. These are easy to carry around and can be exchanged at most banks. The downside is that most banks charge a processing fee and are hard to get to at times.

Cash

If you decide to carry cash, bring only intact dollar bills, as Salvadoran banks and institutions will not accept US bills that are torn, stained, or worn-out. Also, bring small bills as most stores cannot change larger bills such as \$50s & \$100s. There are some stores that even have problems cashing \$20s. Students will need access to cash upon entry into the country given that a tourist visa of \$10 must be purchased at the airport. Exact change is preferred at customs.

Credit Cards

We HIGHLY RECOMMEND that you bring some type of credit card with you for emergency purposes. American Express, Visa & MasterCard are widely accepted (although Visa seems to be more useful).

PLANNING YOUR BUDGET

Your housing, most meals, and program transportation costs are included in the program cost. However, you will want to plan for some spending money while in El Salvador. Plan for emergencies and add a cushion when thinking about your budget.

Expenses to Consider:

1. Airfare - Your airfare is not part of the program cost and you will be responsible for your round trip ticket. Check STA Travel (www.statravel.com) or Student Universe (www.studentuniverse.com) for good student rates
2. Tourist card (\$10) – You will need to pay this cost each time you cross the border.
3. Course textbooks, readings, copies and supplies (approximately \$50)
4. Crafts / gifts / souvenirs
5. Snacks (chips, cookies, soft drinks, etc.)
6. Weekend food money (about \$200 for the semester)
7. Laundry soap and computer paper (approximately \$20)
8. Phone cards
9. E-mail at internet cafés
10. Personal travel (meals, lodging, entertainment, border fees)
11. Fall / Spring break travel (**semester programs only**)
12. Misc. entertainment

Emergency Funds

Please have access to at least \$500 for emergency medical needs (this may be where a credit card would be necessary). Check with your own insurance to see the procedure if you get sick abroad. We have access to good medical care, but you often have to pay out of pocket yourself, keep the receipts, and have your insurance reimburse you when you get home.

CASA RESOURCES

Housing

Unlike many study abroad programs, students who participate in the *Casa de la Solidaridad* will not have to shop for housing once they have arrived in El Salvador. As part of the living and learning community which will be formed, all students will live together in community near the University of Central America (the UCA) in San Salvador. You will be provided with a room, bed, pillow, desk, fan, and bed linens. WE DO ASK THAT YOU BRING YOUR OWN TOWEL(S). Housing is included in the price of the program.

Meals

Meals will be simple and healthy. Breakfast, lunch, and dinners will be served at the *Casa*. Please let us know if you have special dietary needs before your arrival. Remember, all meals during the week are included in the price of the program, however you will want to budget money for weekend meals and snacks as they are not provided at the *Casa*. Bottled water is available at all times at the *Casa*.

Working Out

Although the facilities in El Salvador probably do not compare with those at your home institution, students will have the opportunity for physical fitness. There is a fairly well equipped gym about 1 mile from the *Casa* (equipped with Stair Masters, stationary bikes, tread mills, free weights, Nautilus equipment, aerobics and spin classes). The cost is about \$40 / month. Also, it is safe to run / walk (in pairs) in the early mornings and through late afternoon in the neighborhood.

Doing Laundry

The *Casa* has 2 large pilas (sinks) where laundry can be done by hand. There are no washing machines or dryers so please bring clothes that are easy to wash and dry. The *Casa* also has an iron and ironing board. Students are also responsible for buying their own laundry soap and softener.

Computer Use

The *Casa* has six computers for student use (along with printers) for writing papers yet they are not connected to the internet. Remember that while in El Salvador you will need to buy your own computer paper. Students are welcome to bring personal computers/laptops if they choose. Past *Casa* groups have found it helpful to have personal computers during midterm and final "crunch time". Keep in mind that internet access is only available at internet cafes and one computer lab at the UCA. Know that the *Casa* is not responsible for any theft or damage to your computer if you choose to bring it.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

The following is a general timeline for the summer medical program and the semester program at the Casa. Program Directors will communicate more specific dates by email once logistics are set. They will also be listed on the Casa website at www.scu.edu/casa

Summer 2009 Schedule Overview

TBA	Arrival
TBA	Departure

Medical Program Weekly Schedule

Monday	8-12 2:30 – 5:30 7:30 pm	Praxis / Field Placement Spanish Cleaning Party
Tuesday	8-12 2:30 – 5:30 7:30 pm	Praxis / Field Placement Spanish Movie Night (optional)
Wednesday	8-12 2:30 – 5:30 8 pm	Praxis / Field Placement Spanish Reflection / Spirituality Night
Thursday	8-12 2:30 – 5:30	Praxis / Field Placement Spanish
Friday	8-12 2-5 8 pm	Public Health Course Field Trip – TBA Community outing

Spring 2010 Schedule Overview

January 13	Arrival
May 12	Departure

Weekly Schedule

Monday	7:30 am – 5:00 pm 5:30 p.m. 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Praxis / Field Placement Casa Community Meeting Praxis Class
Tuesday	7:30 am – 10:00 am 10:00 am - 12:30 pm 1:00 pm 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm 7:00 pm 8:00 pm	Political Science Spanish 100 & 110 Lunch Salvadoran Literature Cleaning Party Spirituality Night (optional)
Wednesday	7:30 am – 5:00 pm	Praxis / Field Placement

Thursday	7:00 am – 10:00 am	Philosophy
	10:00 am - 12:30 pm	Economics
	2:30 pm – 5:30pm	Sociology
	6:30 pm	Pupusas with Romero Program
	8:00 pm	Community Night
Friday	9 am - 12 noon	Theology
	2:00 p.m. – 5:00 pm	History

NOTE: *This schedule is subjected to change.*

ORIENTATION

This packet is intended to assist you as you prepare for your academic experience in El Salvador. However, there will be a more thorough orientation upon your arrival. We will spend the first days addressing issues such as: safety and health, program policies, community norms and expectations, academic expectations, program schedule, cultural sensitivity, community development, language assessment, tours of San Salvador, etc. During this time, students will begin creating their living and learning community.

RE-ENTRY ORIENTATION

At the conclusion of the experience and before students depart, there will be another intensive post-orientation for all participants. During this time, the group will address such things as culture shock, how to keep in contact with El Salvador, building systems of support once returning to the United States, and evaluation of the program.

BILLING, PAYMENT, REFUND POLICY

Please be aware that Santa Clara University no longer issues paper invoices to students. All students including participants in the Casa de la Solidaridad program are billed online via their eCampus account. You should have received an email from the eCampus administrator at Santa Clara University which will contain your security access information including your SCU ID and password to your eCampus account. Please save that email for future access to your eCampus account. For more information, please visit the eCampus website: www.scu.edu/ecampus or email eCampus@scu.edu

E-BILL NOTIFICATION – It is extremely important that students forward billing information to the responsible party paying the bill (parent, guardian, home university, etc.). SCU will send bills only to students. HOWEVER, a student can simply forward the PDF billing file to the payer's email address OR set up the payer as an authorized party to receive, and pay, future bills. Instructions on how to set up an authorized payer are located on the Bursar website www.scu.edu/bursar and on the eCampus welcome page. Only Casa de la Solidaridad students from schools with a Direct Billing Agreement with Santa Clara University will be billed via their home institution. Please check with your study abroad office if your institution has signed such contract with SCU.

REVIEWING A STUDENT'S BILL – Billing statements, and a student's statement history, can be viewed online only via eCampus. From the eCampus homepage, click on "Bursar's Office" then "View Account/Make Payment." These actions will take you to the QuikPay/InfiNet site. From the Message Board page, click on "View Accounts." This action will show your most recent statement. To view prior statements, go to the account actions box and select 'statement history'. Students who register, or change enrollment, after the initial billing date will not receive a revised billing statement until the next billing run.

PAYING A STUDENT'S BILL – Students can pay their bills quickly and securely online via eCampus with an electronic check, free of charge, or by credit card. Simply follow the navigation above, click on "Make Payment" and follow the instructions. Please note that a 2.75% non-refundable service fee will be charged for all credit card transactions. Students also may send payments by mail to the address located on the remittance portion of their bills or pay directly at the Bursar's Office located in Walsh Hall. Please remember to include the remittance portion with all payments by mail to ensure proper credit to your account. Questions about student accounts should be addressed to the Bursar's Office at (408) 554-4412 or bursaroffice@scu.edu.

WITHDRAWAL / REFUND POLICY: If a student gives written notice sixty days prior to the commencement of the Casa de la Solidaridad program, they will receive a full refund of their deposit, tuition, and other program fees. Students withdrawing forty days before the published start date will be charged the \$500 deposit. Since virtually all funds are committed once the program begins, no tuition, housing, or other fees are returned if the withdrawal occurs on or after the program start date. Please note that students who wish to withdraw from the University must complete a withdrawal form and an exit interview with the program director. Students who leave the University during a quarter without formally withdrawing are subject to failing grades in all courses in which they were registered and are ineligible for refund of fees.

Students withdrawing after the program start date will also be required to pay full quarter tuition if they wish to enroll on the Santa Clara home campus (other home institutions may have a different policy for their students). Participants in the Casa de la Solidaridad program are provided a supplemental international health insurance. This policy offers coverage for eligible illness, accident, and related travel costs. Health insurance, however, does not cover loss of tuition, housing, or other expenses related to study in El Salvador. It is highly recommended that students consider acquiring tuition insurance to cover any losses associated with a health-related withdrawal from the Casa de la Solidaridad program.

Information on tuition insurance is available through the SCU Bursar's Office website at <http://www.scu.edu/bursar/general/index.cfm>

**Casa de la Solidaridad withdrawal policy supersedes housing, tuition, and fee refund policy for home campus enrollment described in the SCU Undergraduate Bulletin.*

COURSE WORK LOGISTICS

Reading List

Casa directors will be in touch with you regarding required readings for the courses. Do NOT refer to the course syllabi on the web site.

Credits / Units

Credit is issued through Santa Clara University and an official transcript will be issued following completion of the Casa program. Your home institution may accept the Santa Clara transcript, grant credit itself for the courses, or utilize other procedures based upon school policy. Be sure to contact your campus study abroad office to obtain approval for participation in the Casa and acceptance of course credit prior to enrolling. Transfer credit policies differ significantly from school to school and you need to make sure that your home institution will accept your course work at the Casa. As a further backup, you should retain course descriptions, assignments, tests, papers, and other documentation from your Casa classes to assist your home institutions in awarding academic credit.

Tuition

Students are responsible for paying the program costs (tuition, room & board) before arriving in El Salvador unless their home university has arranged for a direct billing agreement with Santa Clara University. Please check with your Study Abroad Office if such billing contract has been arranged. All program costs are published on the Santa Clara University International Programs Office website. Please be aware that some universities may charge a different cost. All students are billed via their e-campus accounts; no paper invoice will be sent to students' home address, but students can download or forward a PDF bill to a third party if they wish.

Course load / Withdrawal from Classes

Semester Program: All Casa students are required to take the Praxis Course. Students then choose from 4 of the following 7 courses to round out your course load: Salvadoran Literature, Political Science, Latin American Theology, History, Philosophy, and Sociology. Students in the semester program are required to register for a full academic load of 15 semester / 25 quarter units. *Summer Medical Program:* Students in the summer medical program are required to take the Spanish and the Public Health Course. This is a set curriculum. Withdrawal from a course is not permitted. The Casa program is an integrated academic / experiential learning endeavor involving a community-based approach to education.

Pass / No Pass Option

Students may take courses on a Pass / No Pass basis depending upon the regulations of their home institution.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

CDC Vaccine Recommendations

Please see the Center for Disease Control Website (www.cdc.gov) and follow ALL recommendations for vaccinations for travel to El Salvador. You can contact your local travel clinic, consult the CDC's website, student health center, and / or family doctor for further information. Casa will do everything possible to help you avoid illness. Ask for a yellow immunization card when getting initial shots (this will come in handy if you ever need vaccines in the future). Some insurance plans cover such shots / medicines, check with your provider.

NOTE: Be sure to bring along prescriptions and vaccination records, etc. If you are allergic to certain medication, this is also important information to have with you. *(Make sure your physician completes your medical form before you return it to Santa Clara University)*

Traveler's Diarrhea

Most physicians recommend carrying eight to ten Cipro 500 mg. or Bactrim DS tablets in case of traveler's diarrhea. The dose is one tablet twice daily in case of diarrhea. Cipro is probably better than Bactrim but is much more expensive. Cipro can also make one more sensitive to the sun. Immodium AD can be purchased over the counter and will help to stop diarrhea, though it will not cure an intestinal infection. It can be taken with the antibiotics. Pepto-Bismol tablets are also helpful in case of diarrhea and for general stomach upset. The best way to avoid diarrhea is to watch what you eat (see following page).

HIV / STDs

Risk of HIV/AIDS and other blood borne and sexually transmitted diseases is present in El Salvador. Travelers should avoid contact with blood or other fluids of persons infected with HIV or with persons whose HIV status is unknown.

To Stay Healthy, Do:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Drink only bottled water or carbonated drinks in cans/bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, ice cubes.
- Eat only thoroughly cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself. Remember: **boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.** *
- All meat should be well cooked. Do not eat shellfish, unless you are in an established restaurant.
- Milk and milk products should be avoided unless you know they have been pasteurized and are fresh.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot.

***The Casa staff provides bottled water and takes necessary precautions in cooking of all meals. Also the Casa has a fully supplied medical kit in case of emergencies.*

To Avoid Getting Sick:

- Don't eat food purchased from street vendors.
- Don't drink beverages with ice.
- Don't eat dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Don't share needles with anyone.
- Don't handle animals (especially dogs, and cats), to avoid bites and serious diseases.
- Don't swim in fresh water. Salt water is usually safer.

Other Health Concerns

- *Cholera:* Cholera is present in the country; however, Cholera vaccine is not required according to International Health Regulations (WHO) or the CDC. Cholera vaccine provides incomplete protection. Strict adherence to food and water precautions lowers risks.
- *Malaria Risk:* Risk of malaria is present in rural areas below 600 meters only (not where students will be spending most of their time). Risk is increased during the rainy season (May-October). Weekly prophylaxis with chloroquine is recommended for those who will be spending most of their time in rural areas close to sea level.
- *Dengue Fever:* Dengue has been present in El Salvador. There is no vaccine for Dengue, although certain

precautions can be followed to minimize the risk of contracting Dengue. As mosquitoes are the carrier for Dengue, Casa makes every attempt to avoid any standing water where mosquitoes might breed.

Summer Program

- Additional health and safety measures are taken to ensure the wellbeing of summer program students while spending time in public health settings in El Salvador. We will discuss such policies and procedures in detail during orientation and throughout the program.

SECURITY & SAFETY

Exercise the same good judgment abroad regarding personal property and safety that you would at home. Be sure to keep a photocopy of your passport, credit card numbers, traveler's check numbers, etc. with you at all times. Make sure that your actual passport is guarded vigilantly both when traveling and at home in San Salvador.

Casa faculty and staff take the safety concerns of the participants very seriously. During orientation and throughout the experience, a considerable amount of time will be dedicated to talking about health and safety issues within the context of El Salvador. Many individuals will be invited to talk about this issue with students upon their arrival. In addition, students will sign a covenant in which they will agree to certain policies regarding safety issues which include, but are not limited to, not taking buses after dark, not walking alone at night, and not abusing alcohol.

Always keep in mind that you are a guest in someone else's home. Any breach of public order, such as intoxication or drug use, can lead to expulsion from the program, the country, or a very stiff jail sentence. Participation in any local / national demonstrations is prohibited by any Casa student. Given the risk to students, the Casa program, and our Salvadoran friends, any Casa student who takes part in a demonstration or visibly intervenes in local politics will be immediately expelled from the program.

Many people have concerns about their health and safety while traveling in developing countries. While the dangers are often exaggerated by the media, it is natural to be concerned about living in a new environment and it is important for anyone considering studying and living outside of their native land to gather as much information as possible.

Parents, students, and study abroad programs all have a role to play in minimizing potential dangers:

University Responsibilities

1. Conduct a periodic assessment of safety conditions on site.
2. Provide safety information to prospective applicants so that they can make informed decisions concerning participation and concerning their behavior while on site.
3. Provide an orientation to participants in order to help them improve their avoidance of high-risk situations and their skills in dealing with problematic events.
4. Monitor the local environment and provide safety updates to participants.
5. Take appropriate actions in the event of a serious deterioration of the local safety environment.
6. Assist participants should a serious safety issue come to the attention of the local personnel.
7. Evaluate the safety issues surrounding program events, excursions, or other services, whether arranged through the Casa or by a third party.
8. Secure or provide referrals for appropriate medical, legal, psychological or other professional assistance for participants experiencing difficulty.
9. Make information available to students concerning health and travel insurance.
10. Conduct regular community meetings throughout the program to discuss issues of health and safety of students.
11. Insure that all participating students have adequate insurance coverage while in El Salvador.

Responsibilities of Student Participants:

1. Make available to Santa Clara University thorough health and psychological information and other information that will be useful in planning for the participant's experience abroad. This involves completing and sending the medical exam accompanied in the pre-departure packet to Santa Clara University before departure for El Salvador.
2. Receive all Center for Disease Control vaccinations for travel to El Salvador (see below for listing).
3. Read and carefully evaluate all materials given that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in El Salvador.
4. Make personal decisions and conduct her/his private life in an intelligent and prudent fashion, paying particular attention to local conditions as outlined and as observed by the participant.
5. Assume responsibility for the consequences of her/his own decisions and actions.
6. Abide by the Student Code of Conduct distributed by Casa staff and faculty.

Responsibilities of Parent and Guardians:

1. Obtain and evaluate safety information concerning El Salvador.
2. Be involved in the decision of the student to participate in this program.
3. Engage the participant in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues related to living and studying in El Salvador.
4. Contact the program co-directors or Santa Clara University with health and safety related questions.

What Santa Clara University Cannot Provide:

1. Guarantee of safety of participants.
2. Assure that risk will not be greater than at home.
3. Stand in loco parentis.
4. Prevent participants from engaging in illegal, dangerous, or unwise activities.
5. Represent the interests of participants accused of illegal activities.
6. Assume responsibility for the actions of persons not employed by or otherwise engaged by the Casa staff and faculty.
7. Assume responsibility for events that are beyond the control of the Casa staff and faculty and its subcontractors.
8. Assume responsibility for situations that arise due to failure of the participant to make full disclosure of pertinent information prior to departure.
9. Assume the adherence of US norms of what is appropriate and acceptable behavior in matters of due process, individual rights, political correctness, and sensitivity to others, relationships between the sexes and among diverse racial, cultural, and ethnic groups.

(Adapted from William Hoffa, From The Parent's Guide to Study Abroad, NY: NAFSA/Kaplan books, April 1998.)

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPORTANT NUMBERS

US Department of Health & Human Services: Traveler's Health Advisory Line: (404) 332-4550

Center for Disease Control: (800) 311-3435

Website: <http://www.cdc.gov>

International Society of Travel Medicine (770) 736-7060

Website: www.istm.org

e-mail: bcbistm@aol.com

US Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs

(Emergency assistance, travel safety, and travel warnings)

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

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

We are familiar with the stereotype of the "ugly American" traveler - loud, self absorbed, and culturally insensitive. Casa strives to be the antithesis of this caricature. We see ourselves as guests. Accordingly, in El Salvador we are privileged to be walking with those who have invited us. It is through their hospitality that we have mutually been given an opportunity for growth.

We also recognize that a student's study abroad experience is part of the Casa's continuing presence in El Salvador. Specifically, by our choices we will shape the reputation, positively or negatively, of Casa in the future. In this sense, community extends beyond those we live with during the semester.

One of the most challenging aspects of the Casa program is to surrender the North American individualism that is bred so deeply in our imagination. We are conditioned to react almost viscerally against any perceived threat to individual choice and freedom. But this is not a universal value. So in respect of this cultural perspective, and prioritizing our "common good" above private license, we have established specific behavior expectations.

Guest Policy

It is always a positive experience when family comes to visit students while they are studying at the Casa. However, at the same time visitors can, at times, disrupt the flow of the semester and the Casa experience. For these reasons, we have established a Casa guest policy.

We STRONGLY suggest that visitors make travel plans to coincide with Casa students' week-long break. If this is not possible, and guests come at another time, students are still expected to attend ALL Casa planned events (community activities, classes, praxis sites, and various activities) and keep up with their commitments during the time visitors are present. Guests are invited to any and all events.

If guests come at a time other than the week break, it must be during the last two months of the Casa program. Upon arrival, students often experience a culture shock and need space to process all of the changes in their lives. Also, students need time at the beginning of the semester to integrate themselves fully in their living / learning community and Salvadoran community and foster new relationships. For this reason, guests should plan to come in the last 2 months of the semester.

For insurance and liability reasons, guests are not allowed to spend more than one night at the Casa. Arrangements can be made at a nearby retreat center for parents and guest house for other visitors. Rates are reasonable and accommodations are more than adequate.

Summer Medical Program: Due to the intensive and short nature of the summer medical program, **we have a "NO GUEST policy" (in other words, guests are not encouraged to come during the summer medical program).**

Alcohol Policy

Solidarity is a value we are striving for in the Casa. We recognize that substance abuse and addiction cause physical, mental, and emotional impairment to the user, pain to family and close friends, and social costs to society. El Salvador has been negatively influenced by substance abuse, particularly alcohol. In agreeing to walk in solidarity with the people of El Salvador, we opt not to abuse ourselves or others by abusing alcohol. This is stated not in the spirit of crusading temperance, but rather of solidarity and sensitivity to the culture.

We need to acknowledge that our attitudes and use of alcohol have been culturally conditioned. In the United States, alcohol is portrayed as the means to relaxation and companionship. This is accentuated in the college subculture. In this climate, excessive drinking can be normative and is often justified as a rite of passage or a stage of growing up. But frequently these learned dispositions and patterns are not so easy to break. Perhaps we are now in a position to unlearn the myth that alcohol is the vehicle for sociality.

We will discuss the attitudes and actions of alcohol use and abuse in El Salvador and students will be invited to make personal and communal decisions on the use (or non-use) of alcohol during the program. In the interest of setting healthy community norms and sending appropriate cultural messages, Casa students may consume no more than two alcoholic beverages at any one occasion. **In addition, alcoholic beverages may not be consumed when in the presence of any becario student (Salvadoran scholarship students with whom the Casa works).** Alcohol abuse will not be tolerated in this experience as it endangers the safety of participants and on-going credibility of the Casa and Casa participants.

Drug Policy

U.S. citizens are subject to the laws of the country in which they are traveling. Penalties in El Salvador for possession, use or trafficking in illegal drugs are strict, and convicted offenders can expect lengthy jail sentences and fines. Use of illegal drugs while participating in the Casa will result in immediate dismissal from the program. Costs involved will be the responsibility of the student. If this policy is unclear, please see a staff person to discuss this component. We will be discussing this policy again in Orientation.

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

While participating in *Casa de la Solidaridad*, all participants will be expected to follow the same policies and conduct code that are applied to all Santa Clara University students. Please read the following *Student Conduct Code* which is included in Santa Clara University's Undergraduate Student Handbook.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The goal of Santa Clara University is to provide students with a general education so that they will acquire knowledge, skill, and wisdom to deal with and contribute to contemporary society in constructive ways. As an institution of higher education rooted in the Jesuit tradition, the University is committed to creating and sustaining an environment that facilitates not only academic development, but also the personal and spiritual development of its members.

This commitment of the University encourages the greatest possible degree of freedom for individual choice and expression with the expectation that individual members of the community will

- Be honest
- Demonstrate respect for self
- Demonstrate respect for others
- Demonstrate respect for the law and University policies, procedures, standards, their administration, and the process for changing those laws, policies, procedures, and standards

In keeping with this commitment, this Statement of Responsibilities and Standards of Conduct and related policies and procedures have been formulated to guarantee each student's freedom to learn and to protect the fundamental rights of others. There can be no rights and freedoms if all who claim them do not recognize and respect the same rights and freedoms for others. In addition to the laws of the nation, the state of California, and the local community, the University administration has established policies, procedures, and standards deemed necessary to achieve its objectives as a Catholic, Jesuit university.

All members of the Santa Clara University community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the goals of the institution and demonstrate respect for self, others, and their property. Students living off campus are members of this community and as such are representatives of the University to the community at large. In this regard, students living off campus maintain an equal measure of accountability to the values and expectations of all members of this community as identified in the Student Conduct Code.

Whether living in or traversing through the neighborhood, or parking in the street, students are expected to adhere to the same high standards of conduct and behavior that are consistent with the students' developing role as responsible and accountable citizens and reflect well upon the Santa Clara University community.

All members of the University community have a strong responsibility to protect and maintain an academic climate in which the fundamental freedom to learn can be enjoyed by all and where the rights and well-being of all members of the community are protected. To this end, certain basic regulations and policies have been developed to govern the conduct of graduate and undergraduate students as members of the University community. The University reserves the right to review student conduct that occurs on and off campus when such behavior is inconsistent with these expectations and the Student Conduct Code. The following acts subject students to disciplinary action:

1. Engaging in any form of academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism (representing the work or ideas of others as one's own without giving proper acknowledgment), cheating (e.g., copying the work of another person,

- falsifying laboratory data, sabotaging the work of others), and other acts generally understood to be dishonest by faculty or students in an academic context. (Law students refer to School of Law code.
2. Illegal use, possession, or distribution of drugs on University-owned or -controlled property. The use or possession of equipment, products, or material that is used or intended for use in manufacturing, growing, using, or distribution of any drug or controlled substance
 3. Falsification or misuse, including non-authentic, altered, or fraudulent misuse, of University records, permits, documents, communication equipment, or identification cards and government issued documents
 4. Knowingly furnishing false or incomplete information to the University, a University official, or judicial hearing board in response to an authorized request
 5. Disorderly, lewd, indecent, or obscene conduct; excessive or prolonged noise; behavior that interferes with the orderly functioning of the University, or interferes with an individual's pursuit of an education on University-owned or -controlled property or during an authorized University class, field trip, seminar, competition or other meeting, or University-related activity on or off University property
 6. Detention, physical abuse, sexual misconduct, or conduct that threatens imminent bodily harm or endangers the physical well being of any person, including harm to self, on any University-owned or -controlled property
 7. Destruction, damage, or misuse of University property or the property of any other person or group where such property is located on University-owned or -controlled property, or regardless of location, is in the care, custody, or control of the University
 8. Theft or conversion of University-owned or personal property
 9. Hazing, harassing, threatening, degrading language or actions, or any practice by a group or individual that degrades a student or employee, endangers health, jeopardizes personal safety, or interferes with an employee's duties or with a student's class attendance or a person's educational pursuits
 10. Intentional obstruction or disruption of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary procedures, or other University activities on University-owned or -controlled property; or obstruction or disruption that interferes with the freedom of movement, both pedestrian and vehicular, on University-owned or -controlled property
 11. Possession or use of firearms, explosives, dangerous chemicals, or other dangerous weapons or instruments on University-owned or -controlled property, except as expressly authorized by University regulation
 12. Unauthorized entry into or use or defacement of University facilities, including residence halls and other buildings and grounds, including unauthorized entry into or presence in or on a University building; unauthorized erection or use on University property of any structures including specifically but not limited to tents, huts, gazebos, shelters, platforms, and public address systems; or unauthorized use of University property for dances, concerts, assemblies, meetings, sleeping, cooking, or eating if said activity interferes with the operation of the University or surrounding community
 13. Publication, posting, or distribution on University property, through the use of University resources (e.g., computers, telephone lines, e-mail services, Internet connections), or at authorized University activities of material that violates the law of libel, copyright, or obscenity, postal regulations, or any law or statute or University policy
 14. Failure while on University-owned or -controlled property to comply with a reasonable request or order of a University executive or other authorized official(s); or refusal or failure to leave such premises because of conduct prescribed by this code when such conduct constitutes violations of this code or a danger to personal safety, property, or educational or other appropriate University activities on such premises; or refusal or failure to identify oneself when requested by a University official provided the official is identified and indicates legitimate reason for the request
 15. Possession, consumption, or sale of alcoholic beverages by persons under the age of 21 years on University property; furnishing alcoholic beverages to persons under the age of 21 years on University property; consumption of alcoholic beverages in a public place (all areas other than individual residences,

- private offices, and scheduled private functions); excessive and inappropriate use of alcoholic beverages. (Also see Alcohol Policy Within the Residence Halls.)
16. Misconduct that arises off campus in which a student is detained, arrested, cited, or otherwise charged with violations of local, state, or federal laws that materially or adversely affect the individual's suitability as a member of the Santa Clara University community
 17. Tampering with, removing, damaging, or destroying fire extinguishers, fire alarm boxes, smoke or heat detectors, emergency call boxes, and other safety equipment anywhere on University property. Creating a fire, safety, or health hazard. Failure to respond to fire alarms, evacuate buildings during alarm activation, or respond to the directions of emergency personnel
 18. Any behavior that disrupts or causes disruption of computer services; damages, alters, or destroys data or records; adversely affects computer software, programs, systems, or networks; and uses data, computer systems, or networks to devise or execute any scheme to defraud, deceive, or extort, or wrongfully obtain money, property, or data. Introduction of any computer contaminant into a computer system or network is a public offense and is subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from Santa Clara University.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

The following applies to US citizens. For other nationalities, verify with a Salvadoran Embassy.

Passport

A valid passport is required. Make sure you begin this process AT LEAST 6 WEEKS before your departure date as the process can be a lengthy one (you can do a rush, but it is much more costly). Your passport is your primary source of identification. Your passport must be valid for the length of time you plan to stay abroad plus six months (180 days) beyond the estimated period

Applying for a U.S. Passport:

The following is a list of items you will need to apply for your US passport (if you haven't already done so)

1. Completed passport application form
2. Proof of US citizenship (previous passport, birth certificate, naturalization papers, or Dept. of State Affidavit)
3. Two standard photos. These must have been taken in the last six months, must be 2@ x 2@, must be identical, and signed on the reverse. Passport photos can be obtained through copy centers such as Kinko's.
4. Proof of identity in the form of valid document with your signature and picture (previous passport or driver's license)
Passport & Processing fee: if you are over 18 years costs \$65.00

If you already have a passport and it is close to expiring (less than a year), you must apply for a new one immediately.

- Where to apply (for US citizens): You can get passport applications at the post office or on-line at: <http://travel.state.gov>.
- Non-US Citizens: Non-residents of the US who plan to study abroad should contact the nearest consulate of their country of citizenship for passport information.

El Salvador Tourist Visa

Students do not need a student visa to study with the Casa. Recently Salvadoran Immigration changed their policy for U.S. travelers. **Students will need to purchase a \$10 tourist card upon entering the country and will need to buy that again once the permission granted is expired (we will talk more about this during orientation).** You will receive more information about entrance & exit requirements directly from the Program Co-Directors.

Important Reminders:

- Allow yourself plenty of time for the passport processes, as it can take up to 6 weeks or more! **YOU CANNOT TRAVEL TO EL SALVADOR WITHOUT IT!!**
- Retain copies of original documents sent for processing.
- Register all mail containing passports and documents.

For additional Help:

- State Department Website at <http://travel.state.gov> (This organization can answer any questions about the document process, as well as specific questions you may have about your destination.)
- National Passport Information Center (NPIC)

CULTURE SHOCK: *NOT ME*

When you leave home to head to a foreign country, you are essentially starting an entirely new life for yourself. You should be aware that this process is filled with ups and downs. Adapting to a new cultural environment usually takes approximately one or two months. For a moment, consider all of the things that you have come to take for granted where you live. You know how to get from one place to another. You know where and how to do your laundry. You know where the dining hall is to get food. You can speak the language fluently and can understand the meanings that lie behind "slang" and other sayings. When you place yourself in a new environment, you throw all of these privileges out the window. You're going to have to relearn all of these seemingly mindless tasks to which you have grown so accustomed. This process can be difficult and also very exciting as you'll be learning a new way of living and being in the world.

These sudden changes in environment can and most likely will bring about the dreaded phenomena of culture shock. Culture shock (and jet lag) can affect your life in a variety of ways: headaches, upset stomach, irritability, homesickness, insecurities, and so on. If you experience any or all of these, don't worry - they are normal reactions! They can be painful and disorienting, but they will go away with time. Try to keep in mind that what you are feeling is normal and that your peers are probably going through the same thing (even if they don't admit it). Culture shock manifests itself in a series of stages. Not everyone will go through all of these stages in the same order, or feel these stages at the same intensity. We provide them here simply as possible answers for puzzling feelings and emotions that you may experience while in El Salvador.

THE FOUR STAGES OF CROSSING A CULTURAL BOUNDARY

1. "National Geographic" Phase

This is the tourist phase, in which the individual experiences the difference between the home culture and the new culture as exciting and exhilarating. Interest in experiencing new and different things, supported by high levels of energy. Often there is a premature identification with the new culture; premature in the sense that it is done on the terms of the individual, not the culture. The individual remains an outsider to the culture in this phase. A constant change to new possibilities is important for maintaining the excitement of this phase.

2. The Fragmentation Phase

After the novelty of the new culture wears off (after a month to six weeks), there is a fragmentation of the ego identity and level of self-esteem. The environmental cues, rules and routines of the new culture come to weigh heavily on the individual. The identity based upon interaction with the home culture is inadequate to the new situation. This is often exacerbated by the sabbatical syndrome, i.e., loss of usual interaction patterns in the work or school context. The individual's usual way of interacting with the environment becomes fragmented. Symptoms are testiness, overreaction to insignificant events, and heightened susceptibility to illness. Old, unresolved conflicts from the past re-emerge now that the ego shield breaks down. What is happening is that the individual has the opportunity now to cross the cultural boundary and become an insider to the new culture. Most will do this; others will refuse and either deny the fragmentation, or leave and return to the home culture.

3. The Reintegration Phase

This is the rebuilding of ego identity. The individual selects elements from the fragmented identity and elements from the new culture, and begins shaping them into a new ego identity. The arrival of this phase (usually ten to twelve weeks into the new situation) is marked by events or experiences which become paradigmatic or symbolic of the new identity. There is a sense of growth and satisfaction at this stage. This is the point where one really begins to become more of an insider to the new culture.

4. The Consolidation Phase

This builds upon the previous stage, making new learning part of the permanent identity. It usually takes a year or more to accomplish.

FINAL THOUGHTS & SUMMARY

PACKING: Your study abroad experience will be more beneficial if you take time to prepare sufficiently before you leave. It's much easier to bring everything you need than to have someone else find it and send it to you; in the same breath, don't bring too much. As mentioned in the *Casa* brochure - you are coming to El Salvador to embrace a simple lifestyle in the context of a developing country.

RESEARCH: Do some research on El Salvador. We will be sending you some articles to read via email. In addition, you may want to talk with people at your school or in the community who have lived or traveled in El Salvador. They may have practical suggestions that we haven't listed in this packet. If so, let us know!!

COMMUNICATION: Collect important addresses, emergency phone numbers, and know how you plan to call internationally (calling card, etc.).

MONEY: Bring travelers checks, cash, or credit cards, although the easiest way is to get an ATM card that operates also as a check card (it bears a major credit card's symbol on the front). These cards can be used as credit cards and also to withdraw cash in your country's currency from an ATM without the fees imposed by money changing stands. Again, remember you are coming to El Salvador to experience the reality of the simple life-style. Keep that in mind when you budget for this experience. All expenses (all food, lodging, and program travel) are covered in your tuition. You will need to budget for additional personal expenses (see page seven).

COPIES: Make photocopies of important documents such as your passport, plane ticket, ATM cards, and phone/address list. It will cost you less than a dollar and can save you countless hours of hassle.

PASSPORT: If you don't have a passport yet, GO GET ONE! It can take up to 6 weeks to complete the process and you CAN'T participate in the *Casa* program without one (because you cannot enter El Salvador without one)!

MEDICAL FORM & VACCINATIONS: If you haven't begun this process yet, do so immediately.

FLEXIBILITY: Be ready to adjust to new aspects of foreign culture. You may feel extremely tired, lonely, HOT, or scared at first, or you may be perfectly fine. *Casa* staff will make every effort to address such issues during orientation and throughout the experience.

CELEBRATE: This is an incredible learning and living opportunity. A select group of students have been chosen from across the country for this experience, and you are ONE OF THEM. Congratulations!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

University International Programs
Santa Clara University
500 El Camino Real; Santa Clara, CA 95053-0639
Phone: 408-554-6940; Fax: 408-554-2340
www.scu.edu/casa
www.scu.edu/studyabroad

*No statement says all
that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the Church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.*

*This is what we are about:
We plant seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted,
knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations
that will need further development.
We provide yeast that
produces effects beyond our capabilities.*

*We cannot do everything,
and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something,
and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete,
but it is a beginning,
a step along the way,
an opportunity for God's grace to enter
and do the rest.*

*We may never see the end results,
but that is the difference
between the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders,
ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.
Amen.*

-Archbishop Oscar Romero