



Costa Rica

Short-term Faculty-led Study Away Program • Summer Intersession • May 19-27, 2012

Course Number & Name: **BMS 400**
International Service-Learning:
FIMRC Medical Mission in Costa Rica

Credit Hours: **2**

Course Overview & Highlights

This program partners with the MSU campus chapter of the **Foundation for International Medical Relief of Children (FIMRC)** <<http://www.fimrc.org>>. Through this partnership, students volunteer their time and skills to support FIMRC's mission of providing access to medical care to millions of underprivileged and underserved children around the world.

Project Alajuelita is an intensive one-week program through which students will gain experience working at the FIMRC clinic in San Felipe, Alajuelita, outside of Costa Rica's capital city of San José. An estimated 12,500 Nicaraguan refugees — mostly women and children — live in this area and suffer from many readily treatable and largely preventable medical conditions.

Participants in this program will live with local host families and work with medical professionals in FIMRC's clinical and community health outreach programs. Students also will have the opportunity to:

- Observe first-hand the disparities between health care "haves" and "have-nots"
- Expand understanding of the people, countries and cultures of Costa Rica and Central America
- Learn principles that may be applied to working with other medically underserved communities

Estimated Cost: **\$900**

Includes: Round-trip airfare from Springfield; Study Away student fee. Separated costs not available.

Excludes: MSU tuition for 2 hours of credit (NOTE: Any student enrolled in this course and program will be assessed the MO Resident tuition rate, even if the student is not a Missouri resident); **\$1,149 FIMRC participation fee***; passport fees; misc. personal expenses.

Application due by Friday March 9, 2012; a **\$135 non-refundable deposit** will be billed to your student account.

\$765 balance will be billed **Fri., April 13, 2012.** The entire program fee must be paid by May 7, 2012 in order for students to participate.

* The FIMRC participation fee covers ground transportation, lodging, meals and volunteer-related activities in Costa Rica. Students pay this fee directly to FIMRC, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to improving pediatric and maternal health in the developing world through the implementation of innovative and self-sustainable health improvement programs. *A portion of the FIMRC program fee may be tax-deductible.*



Missouri
State
UNIVERSITY

An EO/AA Institution

Pre-travel Class Meetings:
6 PM Sun., March 11, PSU (behind Starbucks)
6 PM Mon., April 16, PROF 411
6 PM Mon., May 7, PROF 411

Depart Springfield for San José, Costa Rica:
Sat., May 19, 2012

Depart San José for Springfield:
Sun., May 27, 2012

Post-travel Class Meeting -
Reflection journals & final presentations due;
follow-up focus group:
10 AM Mon., June 11 (location TBA)

Interested in going?

Contact MSU's FIMRC Student Liaison,
Claire Bise, at missouri@fimrc.org

Program Director: Dr. Colette M. Witkowski,
Department Head, Biomedical Sciences Dept.
ColetteWitkowski@MissouriState.edu
836-8961

Study Away!

Missouri State University Study Away Programs

Jim D. Morris Center for Continuing Education, Suite 403
301 S. Jefferson Ave., Springfield, MO 65806
P: 417-836-6368 • E: studyaway@missouristate.edu
W: <http://international.missouristate.edu/studyaway/>

Course Objectives

Though Costa Rica promises universal health care to its 4.2 million native citizens, many of the country's poor — as well as thousands of political refugees from neighboring Nicaragua — have little access to medical care.

This international service-learning course combines academic, cultural competence and community engagement objectives in accord with Missouri State University's public affairs mission. Through this program, students will see the immense need of refugee populations and the extraordinary efforts put forth to provide them hope and good health for the future. This experience will serve as a foundation for students who wish to become more deeply involved in community and global health.

Participants in this program will:

- Be able to speak 20 words/phrases in Spanish prior to departure
- Prepare and present one educational health topic to Nicaraguan refugee and Costa Rican families, with the assistance of an interpreter
- Assist health professionals in the local clinic, soup kitchen, schools and homes
- Keep a daily reflection journal, to be used as the basis for a PowerPoint presentation highlighting their FIMRC medical mission experience and comparing health care in Costa Rica and the U.S.

Course Activities & Schedule

Pre-travel Class Meetings:

- 6 PM Sun., March 11, PSU (behind Starbucks)**
- 6 PM Mon., April 16, PROF 411**
- 6 PM Mon., May 7, PROF 411**

Medical Mission in Costa Rica:

Sat., May 19 - Sun., May 27, 2012

The program encompasses five 7-hour days of health care and education activities. Participants will divide their time between the FIMRC medical clinic and the surrounding community. Activities may include:

- Managing patient intake, charting vital signs and updating medical records
- Observing and assisting clinic staff with well-child visits, acute care and psychological evaluations
- Organizing medications in the clinic pharmacy and reviewing instructions with patients and their caregivers
- Accompanying nurses on house visits
- Conducting health education presentations at the nearby soup kitchen and schools; topics may include nutrition, clean water and sanitation, dental hygiene, prenatal care HIV prevention, etc.

Participants will live with FIMRC-affiliated homestay families. This arrangement provides for three home-cooked meals daily and the opportunity to get to know Costa Rican people and culture first-hand.

Post-travel Class Meeting:

10 AM Mon., June 11 (location TBA) -

Students will hand in their reflection journals and present their PowerPoint reports to the campus and general communities. All program participants will be asked to take part in a focus group to share their impressions, ideas, experiences and suggestions for future FIMRC medical missions.

Course Requirements & Assessment of Learning

Students fulfilling the academic requirements for the course, as outlined below, will receive 2 hours of undergraduate credit for BMS 400. Grades will be based on participation in and completion of the following:

A. Discussion and Participation (30%) -

Students must attend all pre-travel, in-country and post-travel class meetings and participate fully in all assignments and activities.

B. Daily Log/Reflection Journal & Report (30%) -

Students will record their travel itineraries and experiences working with health care professionals and medically underserved populations in Costa Rica, including documentation of one educational session for a Nicaraguan refugee or Costa Rican family. Students also will reflect on how their experiences in Costa Rica challenged, changed or reinforced their pre-existing ideas about the social, economic, political and cultural issues affecting health care in the developing world. This journal will provide the basis for a PowerPoint report comparing the Costa Rican and U.S. health care systems.

NOTE: Students must use the MSU Service-Learning Reflection Journal; no credit will be given for a non-MSU log book or journal. The completed journal must be signed by the Program Director and/or FIMRC coordinator prior to submission.

C. PowerPoint Presentation (40%) -

Students will work in small groups to prepare and present a 10-minute PowerPoint focusing on one aspect of their learning experience with the FIMRC medical mission in Costa Rica and discussing disparities between Costa Rican and U.S. health care.

Required texts: none

Application & Payment

MSU Biomedical Sciences students and others who are approved by the Program Director may apply. Instructions are included on the program application.

Please note that, while Spanish fluency is not required, any level of comprehension will be useful in communicating with the host families, medical staff and, especially, patients.

A **non-refundable deposit of \$135** will be billed to your student account upon application (due by **March 9, 2012**). The balance of the program cost (**\$765**) will be billed to your account on **April 13, 2012**. The entire program fee must be paid by **May 7, 2012** in order for students to participate.

The published program cost is based on rates in effect on the publication date of this flyer and may be subject to change. **Program participants agree to a potential increase of up to 10% in the program fee if costs increase before or during travel.**

Cancellation & Refund Policies

- Students who withdraw prior to **April 20, 2012**, will receive a refund of fees paid, less their deposit and any non-refundable purchases made on his/her behalf.
- If a student is forced to withdraw after **April 20, 2012**, for a bona fide medical reason, s/he will receive a refund of fees paid, less their deposit and expenses. A certificate of incapacitating illness or injury from a licensed physician is required.
- Students withdrawing voluntarily after **April 20, 2012**, or withdrawing due to medical reasons not protected under the fees refund policy, receive no refund.
- Once the program has started, students withdrawing receive no refund under any circumstances.
- All notifications of withdrawal must be made in writing and sent to the Program Director and to Elizabeth Strong at the Study Away Office, Jim D. Morris Center, Suite 403. **Non-payment of fees does not guarantee automatic withdrawal.**
- Any plans by a participant not to travel and return with the group must also be submitted in writing to the Program Director and the Study Away Office.
- The program may be cancelled if enrollment is fewer than 6 participants. In this event, students will receive a full refund.

Voucher Eligibility & Financial Aid

If you entered MSU as a freshman in 2009 or 2010, you may use the **Study Away \$500 voucher**. Students who receive financial aid through MSU may apply that aid to the program, if eligible. Contact the Office of Financial Aid at **836-5262** for more information.