Any of the immersion experiences offered through JCU Campus Ministry will potentially enhance an applicant’s preparation for professional school. Successful immersions should grow an awareness of self, of other peoples and cultures and needs – theirs and ours. These should couple with realistic ways to approach these ends. Some students have an “all-or-none” misconception that the Honduran medical immersion is the only program that will positively impact professional school applicants. Attributes sought by medical schools include longitudinal reflection skills, considerations about social justice and actions to develop both. One cannot become successful by “cramming” intensive thought into a 1-2 week separation from one’s comfort zone. The commitment by past students, faculty, alumni, physicians and others has become a very important part of the Honduras immersion experience. Expectations are high and each applicant should anticipate that we will expect extra time, energy and focus from you. Thoughtful time + EFFORT (by the entire group) = Growth = Immersion success.

A more detailed description of the Honduras immersion follows. Enough detail is provided for you to understand what is required for your success and that of the group. If chosen, your first responsibility will be to share details of this nearly year-long process with your parents and friends. In brief, the Honduras immersion is NOT a field trip… and should, hopefully, never become “poverty tourism.”

To frankly address one specific issue, student cell phones and any other communication devices will be collected upon entry into Honduras and held by faculty. They will be distributed upon re-entry to the U.S. Students will only have access to phones in the event of emergency and/or sickness.

Immediately following your selection, you will begin to be challenged by our Campus Ministry colleagues to expand emotionally & spiritually. Take these efforts and suggestions seriously. Then add to this our group’s commitment to meet a few basic medical needs of our Honduran friends. The person who contributes the most and gains the most from a successful experience is YOU! The social & spiritual growth processes are very capably developed through a series of meetings with all immersion participants. These occur throughout the Fall and Spring semesters. Prepare for the Thursday night sessions. Participate openly.

The “extra dimensions” of the Honduras experience include providing basic medical products and services to Hondurans in remote villages alongside the systematic “mapping” of the villages where we serve. The data collected on one trip helps to determine needs for the next one. Specific expectations include:

1. Development of a basic Latin American Spanish skillset – participating in a group wide Duolingo Challenge has been successful in the past.
2. Demonstration of basic interviewing skills (in Spanish)
3. Demonstration of basic medical skills – obtaining & recording vital signs and performing blood finger sticks and urine testing.
4. THESE CAN BE DEMONSTRATED AND HONED IN A “MOCK BRIGADE” IN FEBRUARY/MARCH
5. Robust participation in the acquisition of medication, materials and money to support our mission
6. Gaining facility with the data-forms used.
7. Team-building and cross-training. Learning to provide help to those with less-developed skills; learning to ask others to do the same for us
8. Developing an environment of respectful communication between all

An overview of a “daily routine” seems an efficient way to detail expectations.

Each morning, a breakfast will be provided and a departure time from Sociedad los Amigos de Ninos (SAN) will be established. This is usually around 8 a.m. but occasionally earlier. Prior to departure, suitcases that have been filled with material to be used during and distributed throughout that day’s brigade are loaded onto our coach transportation. Students help with this process.

**On Brigade**

Most of our brigades require between 90 minutes and 2 hours travel time from SAN. After we arrive at the brigade site, adults and student leaders will assess facilities. Students will unload suitcases, prepare spaces by moving furniture, distributing suitcases and familiarizing themselves with that day’s flow. Patients will pass through the following stations that will include students:

1. Intake
2. Vital Signs
3. Physicians (and lab testing)
4. Pharmacy check-out.
5. An additional group of students will participate in that day’s mapping and will leave the brigade site with Dr. Swearingen.

Departure time will vary from each brigade and are predicated upon a return to SAN no later than dusk (about 5-530 p.m.) Students help with unloading empty suitcases.

**Pre-Reflection activities**

Dinner is communal and usually around 6 P.M.

Evening activities after dinner but before reflection include:

1. Pill counting (meds arrive in bulk. Counted into packs of 60/180)
2. Pharmacy prep for the following day
3. Completion of that day’s data sheets – ALL & NOT elective
4. Individual reflection/reading time

**Reflection**

Come ready to reflect, think deeply, and share about the day.

**WHILE AT JCU**

* Passports/Immunization/Payment
* Duolingo Latin American Spanish Challenge (7 months)
* Demonstrate Vital signs skill (Machine & manual) and fingersticks
* Intake Spanish (Age: 1-80 years/months)
* Urine specimen collection and tests
* Packing Medical supplies and equipment (finals week)
* Data Entry

**TRAVEL**

JCU -------> Cleveland Airport ------> Houston/Miami/Other

Comayagua, Honduras (2 flights @ 2-4 hours)

COACH BUS (3 hours) 🡪 Nuevo Paraiso

Sociedad Amigos de los Ninos SAN

**WHILE at SAN**

* + - Breakfast 7 – 8 a.m. Dinner 6 pm
    - 5 daily medical brigades (90 – 120 minute bus ride)
    - Return to SAN before dark (between 4-5:30 pm)
    - Nightly pill-counting (as needed)
    - Daily Data entry (30 minutes/10 intake sheets)
    - Group reflection (< 75 minutes)
    - Individual reflection/journal
    - Cell Phones secured with faculty upon arrival at SAN. Returned to students upon landing in U.S.