



2020

QERC SPRING SEMESTER

STUDENT HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO THIS HANDBOOK

Welcome to the QERC Spring Program! To succeed in any situation, it is important to know your responsibilities and what is expected of you. Additionally, it is important to have available the resources necessary to meet these expectations.

We look forward to a semester that will provide a lasting experience for you, positive benefits for the San Gerardo de Dota community, and a solid foundation for your future academic and professional goals.

This handbook is meant to be your guide so that you may have the best possible experience this semester. If something is unclear, please ask the field station managers or our intern.

Nothing in this handbook may be interpreted as a binding contract between the student and the participating universities.

A SEMESTER CHALLENGE

What you gain from the next 16 weeks will depend on *what you invest in it yourself*.

We guarantee that you will be presented with the opportunity to test yourself, to pursue meaningful research, develop Spanish language skills, and to contribute to the San Gerardo de Dota community while earning both academic credits and positive memories.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>2020 SCHEDULE AND ACADEMIC CALENDAR</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>TRAVEL MAP</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>DAY-TO-DAY LIFE AT QERC.....</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>OUR MISSION AND VISION</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>PROGRAM OBJECTIVES</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>OUR LEADERSHIP AND STAFF.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>BRIEF HISTORY OF QERC</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>TRAVEL.....</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>LIVING AT QERC</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>A QUICK GUIDE TO SAN GERARDO DE DOTA.....</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>GENERAL HEALTH & SAFETY.....</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>CROSS-CULTURAL ORIENTATION</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>WHEN IN COSTA RICA, DO AS THE TICOS DO</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>CULTURE SHOCK</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>SAFETY IN THE REST OF COSTA RICA</u>	<u>24</u>
<u>STAYING SAFE WHILE TRAVELING</u>	<u>26</u>
<u>SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND PREVENTION IN STUDY ABROAD</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS</u>	<u>35</u>

2020 SCHEDULE AND ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Proposed calendar for 2020 Semester, changes could be made at any time.

DATES	ACTIVITY
JANUARY 4	Students Arrive to San Jose, Costa Rica
JANUARY 5-10	QERC Orientation and Tropical Field Research Orientation <i>Dr. David Hoekman and Matthew McNeil</i>
JANUARY 13-17	Biogeography Module of Tropical Ecology and Sustainability <i>Dr. Bruce Hoagland</i>
JANUARY 20- FEB 2	Central American History and Culture, Spanish Coursework <i>Dr. Dennis Williams, Catalina Retana</i>
JANUARY 22-29	Home Stays in San Gerardo de Dota
JAN 31 - FEB 2	San Jose Orientation <i>Dr. Dennis Williams, Brendan and Emely Blowers De León</i>
FEBRUARY 3-12	Panama Central American Field Studies Trip <i>Dr. Dennis Williams, Brendan and Emely Blowers De León</i>
FEBRUARY 13-16	SPRING BREAK
FEBRUARY 17-22	Entomology (CAPI Weekend Feb 21-23) <i>Dr. David Hoekman</i>
FEBRUARY 21-23	CAPI Lowland Trip: Entomology and Ornithology Focus <i>Dr. David Hoekman, Dr. David Hille, Brendan and Emely</i>
FEB 24 – FEB 27	Herpetology Module of Tropical Ecology and Sustainability <i>Dr. John Cossel</i>
FEB 28 – MAR 1	Hacienda Barú Lowland Trip: Herpetology and Ornithology Focus <i>Dr. John Cossel, Dr. David Hille, Brendan and Emely Blowers De León</i>
MARCH 2-6	Ornithology Module of Tropical Ecology and Sustainability <i>Dr. David Hille</i>
MARCH 9-13	Biblical Theology and Global Stewardship (Introduction) <i>Dr. John Bechtold</i>
MARCH 16-20	Tropical Medicine <i>Dr. Caio França</i>
MARCH 25-APRIL 3	Biomes Tour: Capstone of Tropical Ecology and Sustainability (La Selva Biological Station, Arenal Volcano, Rincon de la Vieja Volcano, Palo Verde Biological Station, Matapalo Mangroves) <i>Dr. Bruce Hoagland, Dr. David Hoekman, Brendan and Emely</i>

APR 6-10	Biblical Theology and Global Stewardship (Conclusion) <i>Dr. Lena Crouso</i>
APR 13-17	Tropical Field Research Reports, Final Papers <i>Dr. David Hoekman</i>
APRIL 20-21	Finals, Presentations
APRIL 22	Community Goodbyes
APRIL 23-24	Semester Debrief <i>Brendan and Emely Blowers De León</i>
APRIL 25	Students Depart

TRAVEL MAP



List of Travel Locations

- San Jose, Costa Rica
- Cerro de la Muerte (Also known as Cerro de la Buena Vista)
- Panama City, Panama
- Hacienda Baru Lodge
- CAPI – Finca Tinamaste
- Organization for Tropical Studies: La Selva
- Arenal Volcano National Park
- Rincon de la Vieja National Park
- Organization for Tropical Studies: Palo Verde
- Matapalo Mangrove Forest
- The following web address can be used to access this Google Map: <https://tinyurl.com/qercmap>

DAY-TO-DAY LIFE AT QERC

Weekdays

6:00 a.m.	Individual Morning Routine and Breakfast on Your Own
8:00 a.m.	Class Lecture / Field Research
12:00 p.m.	Lunch (Prepared by a local cook)
1:00 p.m.	Class Lecture / Field Research
4:00 p.m.	Personal time
6:00 p.m.	Dinner (Prepared by a local cook)
7:00 p.m.	Personal time / Weekly Small Group Meeting

Community Routine:

MON	Towels replaced
TUES	Bedding changed
WED	Towels replaced
THURS	
FRI	
SAT	Towels replaced Breakfast and Lunch on your own Dinner prepared by a group team
SUN	Breakfast and lunch on your own 4:30 p.m. QERC Corporate Worship 6:00 p.m. Dinner at a local restaurant Evenings at the Fire Pit (Weather permitting)

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Quetzal Education Research Center is to promote biodiversity, conservation, and sustainability in global and local communities through a Christ-centered approach.

OUR VISION

The Quetzal Education Research Center brings students and researchers from around the world, including the host country, to engage into dialogue and research focused on the tropical cloud forest and its floral and faunal community for the purpose of sustainability. QERC works to integrate local farmers with research scientists, educators, and students from around the world in the effort to merge good conservation practice and economic viability in the local community.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Offer students meaningful coursework and research opportunities in the valley of San Gerardo de Dota and the surrounding environment.
- Develop a deeper understanding of course content and an appreciation for its significance.
- Produce quality research for the Quetzal Education Research Center, the people of San Gerardo de Dota, and the greater academic community.
- Encourage a greater appreciation for people and communities of varied backgrounds and cultures.
- Foster the positive attitude and open mindset necessary for studying and researching abroad.
- Teach new skills and course content useful for future academic and professional objectives.
- Gain a deeper appreciation for the natural world and understand more about Creation Care.

OUR LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

Director

Dr. David Hoekman, Ph.D
Professor of Biology, Southern Nazarene University
Tel: (405) 491-6657
Email: dhoekman@mail.snu.edu

Assistant Director

Dr. Jeff Griffitts, Ph.D.
Biology Department Chair, Southern Nazarene University
Tel: (405) 491-6400
Email: jefgriff@snu.edu

Field Station Managers

Brendan and Emely Blowers De León
Tel: +506 2740-1010 (In Costa Rica)
Cell: +506 8866-0282 (Can be used with iMessage and WhatsApp)
Brendan's Email: bblowersdeleon@snu.edu
Emely's Email: eblowersdeleon@snu.edu

Field Station Housekeeping and Cooking Staff

Nancy Rayo Amado

QERC Board Members

Keith Newman, Ed.D.

President, Southern Nazarene University

Tim Eades, Ed.D.

Provost and Chief Academic Officer, Southern Nazarene University

Scott Strawn, Ed.D.

Vice President for Business and Finance, Southern Nazarene University

Dennis Williams, Ph.D.

Dean of Teaching and Learning and Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, Southern Nazarene University

Mark Winslow, Ph.D.

Dean of the College of Natural, Social, and Health Sciences, Southern Nazarene University

Jeff Griffiths, Ph.D.

QERC Assistant Director and Chairman, Department of Biology, Southern Nazarene University

David Hoekman, Ph.D.

QERC Director and Professor, Biology, Southern Nazarene University

Brendan Blowers De León, M.A.

QERC Field Station Co-Manager

Emely Blowers De León

QERC Field Station Co-Manager

QERC Professors

Dr. John Cossel

Tropical Ecology and Sustainability – Herpetology

Professor and Biology Department Chair, Northwest Nazarene University

D.A., Biology, Idaho State University

Dr. John Bechtold

Biblical Theology and Global Stewardship

Ph.D., Theology, Philosophy, and Cultural Theory, University of Denver

Dr. Lena Crouso

Biblical Theology and Global Stewardship

Ph.D., Multicultural Christian Counseling, Andersonville Theological Seminary

Dr. Caio França, Ph.D.

Tropical Medicine

Professor, Southern Nazarene University

Ph.D., Biochemistry, University of Oklahoma

Dr. David Hille

Tropical Ecology and Sustainability – Ornithology

Professor, Northwest Nazarene University

Ph.D. (ABD), University of Oklahoma

Dr. Bruce Hoagland

Tropical Ecology and Sustainability – Biogeography

Professor of Geography and Environmental Sustainability, University of Oklahoma

Plant Ecologist and Coordinator, Oklahoma Natural Heritage Inventory

Ph.D., Plant Ecology, University of Oklahoma

Dr. David Hoekman

Tropical Field Research, Tropical Ecology and Sustainability – Entomology

Professor, Southern Nazarene University

Ph.D., Ecology, University of Notre Dame

Dr. Mike Mooring

Tropical Ecology and Sustainability – Mammalogy (Taught alternating semesters, will teach in 2021)

Professor, Point Loma Nazarene University

Ph.D., Animal Behavior, University of California, Davis

Dr. Dennis Williams

Latin American History and Culture

Vice Provost and Professor, Southern Nazarene University

Ph.D., History, Texas Tech University

BRIEF HISTORY OF QERC

In 1982, the idea of the Quetzal Education Research Center emerged out of the relationship between Southern Nazarene University professor Dr. Leo Finkenbinder and landowner/cattleman Efraín Chacón. Efraín and his wife, Caridad pioneered the settling of the Savegre Valley in 1952. At the time, Efraín was known across Costa Rica and across Europe as a leader in raising prized Holstein cattle.

After visiting the valley and seeing the immense biological study opportunities in the montane cloud forest, the seed for the research center was planted in the mind of Dr. Finkenbinder. Dr. Finkenbinder began to bring students down to the valley regularly. Through their letters with the members of the Chacón family, and growing opportunities to host fishermen in the valley, in 1983, the family sold off the prized cattle as they began to dedicate themselves to conserving the ecological prize in their own backyard. They vowed not to cut down another tree. When Efraín tells the story, he often comments how glad he is that he had only an axe when clearing pastureland for the cattle, and not a chainsaw.

This was the beginning of the family's investment into the "eco-tourism" industry which now includes: The Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve and Spa, Batsú Bird Watching Garden, apple and avocado production, trout farming, and succulent plant sales. Each year, thousands of visitors come from around the world.

Dr. Finkenbinder and his wife Zana's early visits to the Savegre Valley were fraught with challenges: their stays in the valley were primitive and rustic, with limited housing facilities and lab space, and to make the trip into the city, they had to first hike 6 miles out of the valley and then hitchhike their way in. As the frequency of their visits increased, the need for a more permanent solution emerged.

Through Dr. Leo Finkenbinder's close relationship with the Chacón family and shared interest in environmental research and sustainability, their partnership led to the completion of construction of a small laboratory in 1996 and a larger educational and research facility in May 2001.

Upon completion of the facility in 2001, students have been invited to participate in research and education opportunities presented by QERC. Areas of research and education have included the study of the local quetzal population dynamics and migration, stream dynamics, mycology, mammal predator/prey relationship, and larger aspects of a tropical ecosystem.

This participation has developed into a comprehensive semester program targeting the implementation, methodology, and findings of tropical biome research. The QERC semester program is designed to holistically engage students in work and programmed experiences that will provide them with the opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in the areas of field research, ecological principles, environmental ethics from a Christian worldview, and in the development of a culture-orientated perspective. In this manner students cultivate and demonstrate applicable approaches to issues of environment and conservation within their geographical and political contexts and the contemporary global challenges facing them.

It is expected by all involved that the relationship between QERC, participating students, visiting faculty, and the larger San Gerardo de Dota community will continue to provide opportunities to develop transformational discernment as they work through the practical implications of the broad ideal of ecological sustainability.

TRAVEL

Costa Rica and Panama Travel

Travel is an integral part of QERC's semester program. Of the 112 days of the program, roughly 30 are spent traveling around Costa Rica and Panama. Our semester travel offers students the opportunity to experience firsthand the historical, cultural, and biological concepts discussed throughout the semester program.

The map of places visited is described in more detail below:

- **San Jose Orientation:** Students spend time learning to navigate the country on their own, finding out about Costa Rican conservation efforts, and faith expression in Costa Rica.
- **Panama:** Students stay with host families through the Church of the Nazarene, learn about the ways Panama's past influence its present, and will visit local indigenous communities.
- **Hacienda Barú:** A visit to tropical lowland forest to encounter and study the herps and mammals that make their homes in this area.
- **CAPÍ:** A visit to premontane forest to encounter and study the herps and birds that make their homes in this area.
- **Biome Tour:** In a 10-day tour around northern Costa Rica, students visit tropical dry forest, volcanoes, mangroves, wetlands and more. They also visit other field stations such as Organization for Tropical Studies' La Selva and Palo Verde.
- **Cerro de la Buena Vista:** On two occasions, students visit nearby Paramo to study both Biogeography and Thermal Ecology.

LIVING AT QERC

SUSTAINABILITY

The Quetzal Education Research Center prioritizes the principles of sustainability. As students in our semester program you are invited to promote and sustain the environmental integrity of your new home.

RECYCLING:

QERC recycles Paper/Cardboard, Plastic, Aseptic Packaging, Aluminum, Tin, and Glass. All recyclable materials are to be thrown away in the designated bins. Please make sure that recycled items are cleaned before placing them in the bins.

ENERGY & WATER CONSUMPTION:

In an effort to better conserve energy, all hot water at the field station is generated by solar power. However, since QERC does still depend on traditional forms of electricity we rely predominantly on skylights and large windows for light during the day and a reasonable use of lights during the evenings. If working during the day, please use lighting only as necessary.

All water at QERC comes directly from mountain-valley streams. The water is treated through two filtration systems before moving into direct QERC plumbing. While this is indeed a sustainable way to access water, we still discourage excessive use due to the long-term environmental consequences of soil over-saturation, bio-waste, and erosion. When using water at the field station, please be conscious of your consumption when showering (please take 5-7 minute showers), washing dishes, or using bathroom sinks. Of course, drink plenty of water.

QERC Community Norms

These are our expectations.

- ✓ Be kind.
- ✓ Take responsibility and act with integrity.
- ✓ Share in good stewardship of our resources.
- ✓ Consider your personal safety and the safety of others at all times.

GENERAL

- ✓ Never hike alone. Check out if you're going on a hike, and return by 5:00.
- ✓ All water entering the building is filtered twice and okay for drinking. The water in the main dining hall has an additional filter and can be used to fill waterbottles
- ✓ **No paper products should be put in toilets. This includes toilet paper.**
- ✓ Quiet hours are between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.; Doors are locked at 9:30 p.m.
- ✓ Visitors must remain on the first floor.
- ✓ Leave outdoor shoes in the outdoor cubbies, not inside.

- ✓ Our reception area is for QERC staff only.
- ✓ SNU's Lifestyle Covenant is always in effect; QERC is tobacco, drug and alcohol free.

Housekeeping in Guest Rooms

- ✓ Our housekeeper may work in guest rooms Monday – Saturday
 - Please help out by keeping your belongings organized. Our housekeeper won't move anything in your rooms, so anything on the floor will have to be cleaned around.
- ✓ Bedding is changed on Tuesdays.
 - On Tuesday mornings, as soon as you wake up, remove your sheets and pillow case, and place them in the hallway basket. Leave your blankets and pillow on your bed.
 - While you are in class, our housekeeper will place new sheets on your bed. If there are items on your bed, sheets will be set aside for you to put on yourself. Our housekeeper will not move any of your belongings.
- ✓ Towels will be replaced on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.
 - All towels will be removed from the racks in the bathroom and replaced with clean towels.
 - If you need a clean towel before Monday or Thursday, please let Brendan or Emely know.
 - Towels are not to leave the QERC building. If you'd like to take one on a trip, please make arrangements with Brendan and Emely. We hold \$10 ransom!
 - Towels should never be hung outside of the bathroom for any reason. Racks are available in the bathroom.

Laundry

- ✓ You are responsible for your own laundry. If someone is waiting to use the machine, you may only do one load of laundry at a time.
- ✓ The machine is available for use after 2:00 each week day. You can use it at your convenience on weekends.
- ✓ Please use the 1/3c measuring scoop in the detergent for your load.
- ✓ Please do not overfill the washing machine. The laundry that you can *comfortably fit* in your basket fills the machine completely.
- ✓ We discourage student use of the dryer. The clotheslines are an ecological alternative. Dryers are \$5 per load if used. This must be arranged with Brendan and Emely.

Building Tidiness

Please remember that this is a research facility with many uses. It is quite possible to have guests or visitors drop by at any given time to use or tour our facilities; therefore, we must keep things orderly.

- ✓ Leave your shoes in a shelf in the table in the back, not by any other door.
- ✓ Wet/damp clothes are to be dried on the clothesline.
 - Girl's intimate items may be dried on the racks available in their rooms.
 - Do not use the balcony railings for drying clothes, paint will come off on your clothes.
- ✓ Wet/Damp towels should only be hung on bathroom racks.
- ✓ Pick up after yourself after leaving the common room and laboratory.
 - There shouldn't be any personal belongings lying around that aren't being used.
 - Items left in these rooms overnight will be kidnapped, you'll have to pay a fee to get them back. Fees go directly to Brendan and Emely's personal cookie fund.
 - Put away in their proper place all items used from the storage room and lab closet.

- If you are keeping out equipment for continual use, please organize it in a visually pleasing fashion at the end of your workday.
- Microscopes must be covered if not in use.
- Return computer workstations to their original configuration after use.
- ✓ Library expectations
 - Each book on the bookshelf has an ID that tells you where it should be put away. Please return books to the correct spot after use.
 - Do not keep library books in dorm rooms, as they are for community use.
 - Library books should remain indoors at all times.
- ✓ Leave furniture in its original position in the common room.

Community Living

- ✓ Quiet hours are between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
 - Please be respectful of the noise level when talking, watching TV, and walking up and down the stairs.
 - When listening to your own music any time of day or night, use your headphones.
- ✓ Please be fully clothed before exiting the shower areas.
- ✓ Please limit your time in the shower to 5-7 minutes.
- ✓ The common room upstairs has many purposes.
 - To provide the best learning environment possible, it is designated to be strictly as a library and for academic use until 4:00 p.m.
 - After 4:00 p.m. the room is available for playing games and watching movies.
- ✓ The labs and lab classroom are designated as a work and study area only. These areas are not appropriate for games. These areas are the best study areas in the evenings.
- ✓ The dining area tables are an excellent space for playing games or hanging out.
- ✓ We encourage students to invite family and friends from home to QERC during Spring Break. Visitors may stay in one of the nearby hotels (We recommend the Savegre Hotel). Please let Brendan and Emely know if you're expecting visitors during this time. We strongly discourage visitors at any other time during the semester. Your academic work, local relationships, and research projects should be your priorities.
- ✓ The downstairs kitchen area is the best space to entertain your local host family and friends.
- ✓ Visitors should not enter the second floor of the building without the explicit permission of Brendan or Emely, and should be solicited at least 24 hours in advance. This helps to maintain a sense of privacy for all.

INTERNET AND PHONE USE

- ✓ Be conscientious of your Internet use- bandwidth is limited so streaming, downloading or personal video chats should be done before 8:00 a.m. or after 4:00 p.m.
- ✓ The phone in the student kitchen is available for guests. The phone number is 2740-1007.
- ✓ International phone calls: We suggest using Google phone (Use through your Gmail account to call anywhere in the US for free) or an app such as Viber or WhatsApp as calls can be made for free.
- ✓ Make these calls before 8:00 or after 4:00 only.

Snack Bar Area

- ✓ Coffee, tea, and hot chocolate are all provided at no charge.
- ✓ Other snacks and drinks are available for purchase.
 - Prices are posted and should be paid to the container.
 - Please record your purchases in the Appetite Albatross Notebook.
 - Expect to pay for your purchases each weekend.
- ✓ Clean up any spills you make.
- ✓ Wash and hang up mugs after every use.

Comedor / Dining Area

- ✓ Weekday meal times are 6:00 - 8:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., weekend dinner is at 6:00.
- ✓ You are responsible for your own dishes – wash, dry and put them away immediately after use.
- ✓ The area should remain clean at all times. Pick up after yourself.
- ✓ No food is allowed upstairs. Drinks may be taken up, but glasses and mugs must be returned before bed. This prevents unwelcome pests.
- ✓ Food dishes should never leave the downstairs area. This is to prevent unwanted pests entering the building.
- ✓ Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves. Dishes must be washed, dried and put away after each use.
- ✓ Personal plates, silverware, and cups are to be washed individually following each meal. Dinner cleanup will be divided up between students on a nightly basis. Consult the schedule.
- ✓ The kitchen (not the dining area) is closed Monday-Friday after 8:00 a.m. and between meals to allow the cook space to work.

Community Communications

- ✓ Any new information you need to know will be written on the whiteboard in the lab.
- ✓ A weekly gathering and/or small groups will be held on Thursday nights after dinner.
- ✓ 1:2 times will be scheduled by weekly with Brendan and Emely to check in on how the semester is going for you.

Check Out

To prevent very worried professors, field station managers, and unnecessary searches in the forest, please check out on the clipboards located at the reception or by the shoe cubby when any of the following apply:

- ✓ You're off on a hike (Make sure your buddies check out too) for any length of time. Reminder: YOU MUST RETURN BY 5:00.
- ✓ You'll be skipping a meal.
- ✓ You'll be out after 9:30 p.m.
- ✓ You're leaving the valley.
 - If you're leaving the valley, you're required to leave contact information for the Field Station Managers in case of emergency. Please also check out a phone. This is to help us keep you safe in an emergency.

Transportation

- ✓ To take a day trip into San José, there are local options to get to the bus stop at the top of the valley. Juan Carlos provides transportation (8692-2045) along with several other residents. The going rate for a ride out of the valley is around C10,000.
- ✓ The MUSOC bus costs around C 3,250 to go into San José from kilometer 80.

A QUICK GUIDE TO SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

"One's destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things."
Henry Miller

A key aspect of survival is the maintenance of sanity. Don't go crazy.

QERC is off the beaten path, so it's very easy to isolate yourself.

GET OUT! WALK AROUND, HIKE – EVEN IF IT HAS NO PURPOSE.

Ways to engage with the community:

- ✓ **Coffee** – Go to the Hotel Savegre lounge or to Café Kahawa. Felipe, Ale, and Matilde are also starting a new coffee shop in the valley which will be located next to the Quanstrom House.
- ✓ **Conspicuous reading** – Put yourself out there, make your face a familiar one
- ✓ **Greet people** – Make yourself an extrovert
- ✓ **Soccer**
- ✓ **Mass**- 2nd and 4th Wednesday Afternoon at 2:00 p.m.
 - ✓ Tip- in the Catholic Church it is considered rude for non-Catholics to partake in communion. If you want to join in, ask the priest for permission before hand. Otherwise stay in your seat or hold arms across chest at the altar for a blessing.
- ✓ **Language exchange**- teach someone English, they'll teach you Spanish
- ✓ **Frequent local businesses** – Del Rio Spa, Marlen's Pulperia, Eilyn's Pulperia, Miriams (a hike!) Los Lagos, Dantica, Café Kahawa, etc.
- ✓ **Host family** – Take advantage, cafecito (little coffee break), study there, etc.
- ✓ **Plan activities** – Saturday soccer, Frisbee, Game Nights, Movie Nights, remember to invite your new local friends!
- ✓ **Interactions with tourists** – teach them something you have learned

GENERAL HEALTH & SAFETY

It is everyone's responsibility to work safely and watch out for others. Aim to prevent accidents *before* they happen.

Students are responsible for their own personal care needs and products including, but not limited to, insect repellent, sunscreen, lip balm, tylenol, anti-acid tablets, moleskin and any other type of prescription or over-the-counter drugs.

ILLNESS AND INJURY

Any student who becomes ill or injured while participating in the QERC semester program must notify the field station managers, staff, or visiting faculty immediately.

We strongly encourage communication regarding any illness that you may feel so that it can be promptly addressed. Please communicate openly and frequently with Brendan and Emely. Open communication allows us to take steps quickly so that you experience as little discomfort as possible.

Non-life-threatening injuries will be treated by appointment at either Centro Medicas Pinares (Call Dr. Luis Calvo for appointments at 2271-2835) or Clinica Biblica (Call 2522-1000 for appointments). Centro Medicas Pinares is located in Curridabat. There, the QERC-recommended physician is Dr. Luis Calvo. He speaks English and is very familiar with treating study abroad students. Clínica Bíblica is located downtown San Jose, which you will be visiting during orientation. Please let Brendan or Emely know if you need an appointment.

In the event of injury, every reasonable effort will be made to contact a parent or legal guardian at the phone numbers provided on the student's medical information form. In the event a student requires emergency treatment, this consent authorizes participating members, faculty, and staff of Quetzal Education Research Center to seek appropriate care. It is helpful to memorize your Passport and Social Security number, as it will be helpful on the paperwork. We also strongly recommend always keeping a copy of your passport photo page with you.

FIRST AID

A First-Aid kit is available at reception. Notify the field station manager or visiting faculty if needing first-aid attention. The supplies to the first-aid kit are reviewed regularly; however, if you find that something is low, notify the field station managers to refill it.

COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS

Sunburn: San Gerardo's high elevations and sunny climate can lead to high UV exposure when working and studying outdoors. Thus, the use of personal sun protection while in the field is strongly encouraged. Students are encouraged to wear a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses with UV protection, long sleeves and long pants whenever possible to protect themselves from the sun. Students are also encouraged to use sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher every day on exposed skin and lip balm with SPF 15 or higher.

Skin Irritation/Rashes: You are living in a different climate than you are probably used to. Please be sure to thoroughly dry off after bathing or swimming and allow sufficient time for your clothes, shoes and other items to dry if they are wet. We also recommend showering immediately after hiking.

Upset Stomach: With a change in diet, we recommend eating lightly the first week you're here while your stomach adjusts. It's probably best to avoid excessive dairy products. Water is generally potable, especially in the city, although there are some areas in the countryside where it is not. Always ask. The water at QERC is safe to drink.

An upset stomach or diarrhea can leave you feeling miserable. If left untreated, it can lead to exhaustion and dehydration, too. A special diet known as the BRAT diet (**B**ananas, **R**ice, **A**pplesauce (or apples), and **T**oast) is an effective way to treat both.

Diarrhea: There are two types of diarrhea infections: viral and bacterial. A viral infection will pass within a day or two; something like Pepto Bismol can really help. It is very common to get diarrhea while your stomach becomes accustomed to the change in food. You should always drink as much liquid as you lose, as dehydration is a danger with diarrhea. Stay away from greasy foods. Strong lemonade, limeade, or teas with honey are good for diarrhea. If it lasts for more than two days, talk to the managers.

Constipation: Being constipated means your bowel movements are tough or happen less often than normal. Almost everyone goes through it at some point. The normal length of time between bowel movements varies widely from person to person. Some people have them three times a day. Others have them just a few times a week. Going longer than 3 or more days without one, though, is usually too long. After 3 days, your poop gets harder and more difficult to pass. It can happen when there are changes to what you eat or your activities, not enough water or fiber in your diet, eating a lot of dairy products, not being active, resisting the urge to poop, stress, and other more serious factors. Let Brendan or Emely know if you're feeling constipated and take these steps: Drink two to four extra glasses of water a day, try warm liquids, especially in the morning, add more fruits and vegetables to your diet, exercise most days of the week. When you move your body, the muscles in your intestines are more active, too. You can try taking a laxative, too.

CROSS-CULTURAL ORIENTATION

1. You are a newcomer. Don't be afraid to make mistakes.
2. Things may seem illogical, but there is often a rationale for those on the inside, with their own history and worldview.
3. Remember that since you are learning to navigate this new setting, as a new cultural child you may lose some of your earned independence back home.
4. Like most things new in life, there are cycles of mystery and delight as well as of frustration and dislike.
5. It is ok to have to step back to your comfort or familiar zone to renew your strength from time to time. JUST DON'T STAY THERE OR YOU'LL MISS OUT.
6. Embrace ambiguity and uncertainty
7. Be real about your personal non-negotiable values. Also understand that people in this culture may value them differently; push yourself to understand where they are coming from.
8. Remember you may be considered just as strange as those you are considering strange.
9. Laugh at yourself a lot, give yourself grace and space.
10. Love can go a long way.

Being in a new cultural environment makes it more difficult to read situations. Always trust your gut instincts and be aware that you may not be able to read cultural cues as you would in a familiar environment, even if you speak the language.

The idea of "political correctness" does not necessarily apply in Costa Rica or other Latin American countries as it does in other areas. Latina culture is known to be formal and machista and the degree varies depending on the country, region, social class and family.

You will have an easier time at first if you are conservative with your behavior speech, dress, gestures, etc. You can loosen up later on once you have a feel for what is appropriate. This does not mean that you have to deny who you are, rather it is a temporary adjustment to your surroundings.

WHEN IN COSTA RICA, DO AS THE TICOS DO

An old adage, but a few of the things listed below may help you adjust and integrate more easily into Costa Rican culture.

- ✓ Greet everyone you see. Costa Ricans are friendly and warm, and they'll think you are too if you simply greet them. "Hola, buenos dias" is a great place to start. Watch Costa Ricans around you to get a good feel for this rhythm of life.
- ✓ Shake hands and share cheek kisses.
- ✓ Eat with both hands on the table. Even better if each hand is occupied with knives and forks.

CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is described as the feelings one experiences after leaving their familiar, home culture to live in another cultural or social environment. Even the most open-minded and travelled individuals are not immune to culture shock. Culture shock has three to five phases, depending on which source you read.

PHASES

The Honeymoon Phase

This is a fun time. Everything is great, exciting, and new. You love the differences, meeting new people, tasting new foods, seeing different architecture, doing new things, working in your new job. Like any new experience, there's a feeling of euphoria when you first arrive to a new country and you're in awe of the differences you see and experience. During this stage, you still feel close to everything familiar back home. This phase can last days, weeks, or months.

- ✓ What are some emotions you see that would be associated with this stage? (Positive, overwhelmed, excitement, stimulated, enriched...)
- ✓ What are some ways you see yourselves in this stage right now? What are you DOING that shows that you are in this stage? (taking pictures, emailing home...)
- ✓ What are some things about the culture that you're really excited about? New adventures? (Rafting, volcanoes, beaches, snorkeling...)

The Honeymoon is Over Phase

During this phase, you're noticing differences, even slight differences, and typically not in a good way. You don't like people's attitudes; you have had enough of the food and just want mom or dad's home cooking. Life is too fast/slow, things are so much "better" at home, they celebrate the wrong holidays, and so forth. You will find that you cannot communicate and are bombarded with unfamiliar surroundings, unreadable social signals, and an unrelenting barrage of new sounds. During this phase, a person often feels anxious, angry, sad, and/or irritable.

- ✓ What are some emotions that might be associated with this stage? (Provoked, worked up, hostile, cross, anxious...)
- ✓ What would be negative outcomes of this stage? (Reject the culture as inferior, become depressed, and become prejudiced toward the culture...)

The Negotiation Phase

Essentially, during this phase you decide whether you will succumb to negativity or negotiate past it to make the most of your experience. If you're successful, you regain your sense of perspective, balance, and humor, and move on to the next phase.

- ✓ What are some emotions that might be associated with this stage? (Tenacious, hardy, brave, determined, daring, courageous...)

The All is Well, or Everything is OK Phase

You feel more at home with the differences in the new culture. *You finally begin to feel like yourself again. You learn to integrate your own beliefs with those of the new culture. You may start to replace old values with newly discovered ones, or perhaps you will begin to find ways to exist within both cultures. You will now have a routine,*

GRANT ME THE SERENITY TO
ACCEPT THE THINGS I CANNOT
CHANGE, COURAGE TO CHANGE
THE THINGS I CAN, AND WISDOM
TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

feel more settled and feel more confident in dealing with the new culture. Depending on how big a change a person has experienced, the person may feel as if the culture isn't in fact new, but that they belong, or the person may not exactly feel part of the culture, but they're comfortable enough with it to enjoy the differences and challenges. The person doesn't have to be in love with the new country (as in the honeymoon phase), but they can navigate it without unwarranted anxiety, negativity, and criticism.

*What are some emotions that would go along with this stage? (Confidence, happiness, relief, appreciation, understanding, relaxed...)

*How would your actions show that you are in this stage? (Using Spanish, playing soccer, integrating with families...)

The Reverse Culture Shock Phase

Sure enough, this can happen! Once a person has become accustomed to the way things are done in a different country, that person can go through the same series of culture shock phases when they return home. We'll talk about this stage more in depth at the end of the semester.

DEALING WITH CULTURE SHOCK

Learn as much as you can. This means the good, the bad, and the simply different — from time zones, to what side of the street people drive on, to climate/temperature, to foods, political system, culture, customs and religion(s), to "Can you drink the water?".

Be open-minded and willing to learning. Ask questions. If you are going to a place where people speak a different language, consider taking a few courses in that language.

Maintain a sense of humor. (Perhaps the most important!)

Don't withdraw! Travel within the country, and visit cultural events and locations, such as museums or historic sites.

Build new friendships. Associate with *positive* people.

Bring a few touches of home with you, such as photos of your favorite locations and family members, etc. Your host families will be interested in hearing about your family as well!

Keep in touch some with people at home by Skype, email, phone, postcards — whatever. This can give you some comfort while away, and it will help you to minimize reverse culture shock when you get back home.

Adapted from: <https://www.hziegler.com/articles/culture-shock.html>

SAFETY IN THE REST OF COSTA RICA

PEDESTRIANS

Traffic is probably the most dangerous thing you will encounter in San José. *Pedestrians do not have the right of way, in fact, they have no rights at all.* DO NOT RISK IT!

- ✓ Always cross at a light, and make sure that all traffic has stopped before crossing, even if you have a green light.
- ✓ On cross streets or blind curves, you must be very careful, cars will come quickly around the corner without considering that there may be a pedestrian.
- ✓ When crossing in front of a parking area, keep an eye out for cars backing out. If they see a break in traffic, they'll take it, not considering that a pedestrian may be behind them.
- ✓ Look all four ways when crossing, even at a one-way street.
- ✓ Drivers in Costa Rica can be distracted or careless, and pedestrians are not given as much leeway as in the U.S.
- ✓ The roads are generally in bad condition and over-crowded with inexperienced or unlicensed drivers. There is little enforcement of traffic laws, which results in many people driving under the influence and at speeds much higher than those posted.
- ✓ The streets and sidewalks in San José are uneven and full of holes. Be aware of where you put your feet while you are walking, especially when stepping off curbs. Often, there are uncovered drainage channels and deep ditches between the street and the sidewalk that are easy to fall into as you step off the bus.

TAXIS

We strongly recommend taking a taxi after dark in San José. Taxis in San José are inexpensive and safer than taking the bus or walking after dark. The cost of a taxi is much cheaper than replacing items that could be stolen or risking your personal safety.

ONLY USE OFFICIAL TAXIS. Official taxis are painted red and have a yellow triangle on the door. These taxis are licensed with the government. They are safer, and give honest fares.

- ✓ Females should always sit in the back of the taxi. Never in the front.
- ✓ When you get in, look for the meter (María). It should be set somewhere within 635 colones.
- ✓ Make sure that the driver starts the meter as soon as you get in the car. If he or she refuses, ask to stop the vehicle and get out of the car. They are required to use the meter. After 10:00 p.m. they do have the right to charge you an additional 10% on your fare.
- ✓ If the driver tries to over-charge you, but it is dark with no one on the street, we suggest that you pay the fare, but also write down his number and the taxi company from the door and report him.

Overall, we have found the majority of taxi drivers to be honest and respectful of both staff and students. We have noted exceptions here, not the rule.

SAN JOSE TAXI

This is what an official taxi in San Jose looks like.

Note the red color, and official red triangle posted on the door.



ROBBERY AND PERSONAL SAFETY

The rate of robberies in Costa Rica is not necessarily any higher than any other countries. However, you most likely stick out as an obvious foreigner and tourist, which is not necessarily true in your home country. It's possible that you will be robbed during your time in Costa Rica. It could happen to almost anyone.

There are several ways robberies can occur.

- ✓ Pick-pocketing- You don't realize you've been robbed until later.
- ✓ Grab and run- The robber grabs your bag, iPod, necklace, etc. and runs.
- ✓ Armed robbery- Held up with a knife or gun in exchange for your items.
- ✓ A new style of robbery has been committed lately in Costa Rica. There are usually a group of three or so "bad guys/girls". They jump out of a car to intimidate for the purposes of taking your things. It commonly happens when people are alone. Similar things can happen with several folks on motorcycles riding up, taking your things, and riding away.

If any of these things happen **JUST GIVE UP YOUR STUFF!** Don't try to put up a fight.

GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

- ✓ Minimize risk by not carrying valuables with you. Leave everything of value (passport, credit cards, driver's licenses, cameras, jewelry) at QERC. A good rule of thumb is: Don't take anything with you that you don't want to lose.
- ✓ If you do need to carry valuables, do not attract attention to them.
 - If you have one, wear a money belt under your clothing.
 - Don't keep large amounts of cash in your wallet that couple be visible when you open it.

- Don't wear fancy jewelry. It attracts attention and is easy to grab and run away with.
- ✓ Always carry a copy of your passport and medical information. Keep your QERC ID card with you, it has pertinent phone numbers in case of emergency.
- ✓ Don't use headphones when you are walking around. It can distract you, block out potentially dangerous sounds, and identify you as a target for someone that might like that phone or mp3 player you're using.
- ✓ When carrying a backpack, keep it in front of you or under your arm. Keep valuable items in inside pockets, not easily accessible outside pockets.
- ✓ If you stop and put your bag down, continue to keep physical contact with it. Loop the strap around your foot or arm.
- ✓ Ask women for directions, not men. Also, avoid looking at maps or looking lost on the street.
- ✓ DO NOT WALK ALONE AFTER DARK. Always use a taxi instead of walking.
- ✓ Don't change money on the street. Always use a bank.



*In almost all cases when someone is robbed or assaulted, the assailant tries to open up a space with the victim. Most commonly, this is done by asking for directions, the time, a cigarette... anything that gives them the opportunity to stop you and gets you within range for them to attack. **Avoid getting into this type of situation.** If someone tries to stop you, simply keep walking out of their range. You can answer in passing, "No se" or "No hablo Español". In all encounters with people you don't trust, remember to keep enough distance between you and the other person so that you remain out of arms reach.*

It's quite likely that this won't happen to you while you're in Costa Rica or Panamá. However, we want to provide you with the tools and strategies to both avoid these kinds of situations and to react appropriately should it happen.

STAYING SAFE WHILE TRAVELING

BUS STATIONS

If you have your ticket, plan on arriving about half an hour before your scheduled departure time. As there are several bus stations in San José, be sure to confirm that you are in the right location.

At the station, keep your bags in front of you. *Keep an eye and a hand on all your belongings all of the time.* Use a money belt or keep your money and/or valuable items hidden on your body.

As a piece of advice, confirm that you are on the correct bus when you board. Sometimes, at the same bus station, there are two destinations with the same name, yet completely different geographical locations.

ON THE BUS

We suggest that you don't travel with more than you can fit inside the main cabin of the bus with you, meaning, don't put your stuff under the bus. If you do have to put your bags underneath the bus, you have to remember

to keep an eye out the window at each stop to ensure that someone doesn't walk away with your bag. Try to get a window seat on the side that your bags are located.

In the overhead storage area on the bus, try to put your things across the aisle and up a seat so that you can best keep an eye on your bag. We also suggest tying them or clipping them to the post. Don't put your bag underneath your seat unless you loop it around your foot. It's simple for someone behind you to cut it open or pull it out from behind.

If you plan to sleep, just keep your bag on your lap. Make sure that your money and valuables are on your person at all times.

Keep your passport copy handy because police often stop the bus to ensure that all passengers are in the country legally.

BEACH SAFETY

Never swim alone.

Every year, more than 100 people drown at Costa Rican beaches, mostly foreigners. Usually, this happens at beaches that are known for bad rip tides or strong surf. However, a normally safe beach could also be dangerous if a storm has just occurred in the ocean. Rip tides are not easily detected and can quickly sweep even the best swimmers out to sea. There is a list of safety conditions at popular beaches at the end of the book, however, also check with the folks at your hotel or on the beach about the current ocean conditions. Also, check for signs at the beach and act accordingly.

If you do get stuck in a rip tide, remember the following steps.

- ✓ Stay calm and relax. Don't try to fight the current. You won't be able to and you'll just quickly exhaust yourself.
- ✓ Let the current take you out. It won't generally take you out so far that you can't swim back.
- ✓ Do not try to swim in a straight line back to the shore. Rather, swim slowly and calmly at a diagonal angle back to the shore.

People caught in rip tides usually panic, the try to swim against the current to get back to shore. This causes them to use too much energy and makes it impossible for even the strongest swimmer to continue swimming. Prevention is best. Avoid beaches with rip tides.

SWIMMING SAFETY CHART - A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO BEACHES

REGION	PERFECTY SAFE AND TRANQUILO	BE CAREFUL!	DANGEROUS – DO NOT SWIM
GUANACASTE	Playa Panama	Playa Tamarindo	Playa Ostional
	Playa del Coco	Playa Nosara	Mal Pais
	Playa Brasilito	Playa Garza	Playa Flamingo
	Playa Conchal	Puntarenas	Playa Doña Ana

	Playa Ocotal Sugar Beach Playa Hermosa Playa Carillo Playa Samara/Cangrejal Playa Potrero	<i>There are occasional currents. Do not swim too deep.</i> Montezuma <i>The beach in town is great for swimming, but Playa Grande outside the town is dangerous.</i>	
MIDDLE AND SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST	Playa Uvita / Ballena Golfito (Osa Peninsula)	Manuel Antonio <i>The beach in the park is okay, but the beach in town is dangerous. Do not swim.</i> Puerto Jimenez <i>Osa Peninsula; Watch the tides, do not go in deep.</i>	Playa Jaco Playa Hermosa Playa Matapalo Playa Dominical Playa Pavones (Osa) Playa Zancudo (Osa)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND PREVENTION IN STUDY ABROAD

SAFETI On-line Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 2, Spring 2000 - Summer 2000

By Nancy Newport, RN, LPC

Licensed Professional Counselor, Consultant to Peace Corps

INTRODUCTION

It has been my experience over the years as a Consultant to the US Peace Corps that the issue of sexual harassment for women can become a major stress factor that can greatly affect the entire overseas experience.

The information included in these pages comes directly from the work I have done with hundreds of inspiring and courageous Peace Corps Volunteer females as well as my own personal experience as a 22 year old Peace Corps Volunteer in Brasil many years ago. I have listened to and experienced the struggles, fears, frustrations, dilemmas, as well as joys of being a female in a developing culture. I have learned a great deal from the experience and from the incredible women with whom I have had the privilege of counseling. My life and my clinical work have been immeasurably enriched by the experiences we have shared together.

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

We all want to be culturally sensitive, to get along, to be respectful, to fit in, to not offend. In training, cultural sensitivity is emphasized and highly valued. It can be the doorway through which a college student studying abroad gains entry to and acceptance with the community abroad.

It is very important that the cultural sensitivity training provided never requires that you submit to behaviors that invade your personal boundaries and that feel unsafe or even uncomfortable to you. If it feels inappropriate or makes you uneasy, get yourself out of the situation. Never sacrifice yourself or your sense of safety for the sake of cultural sensitivity.

PERSONAL

Personal boundaries are the personal space around us, physically and emotionally, that serves to preserve our physical and emotional integrity. When someone gets "too close", an alarm sounds inside. We need to listen for, respect, and respond to that alarm. We also need to respect the personal boundaries of each other. These areas can be very confusing for students for several reasons:

Reason One: The issue of personal boundaries tends to be confusing for people. Some of us were raised in families with broad rigid boundaries, lots of secrets, locked doors, distance from people, and perhaps even distance from our own emotions. Others of us were raised in families with loose boundaries, or inconsistent boundaries where people did not consistently allow personal respect or require privacy, where frequently no one knocked on bedroom doors before entering, where people shared common space and little personal space was available. And some of us (a very few) were raised with more of a balance of closeness, respect, and honoring of privacy and personal space.

Reason Two: Social conditioning in college has influenced boundary understandings by increasing tolerance for loose, fluid boundaries. Many college students have been acclimated to a very loose boundaried college culture. Students may "crash" in each other's dorm or apartment...males and females may share sleeping space for convenience without sexual expectations. They may have become accustomed to, and therefore have a high tolerance for loose personal boundaries.

Reason Three: We "assume" every one has the same understanding about personal boundaries as we do. Now enter another country and find the whole issue of boundaries and personal space is highly influenced by cultural norms and very different from what you are accustomed to. And the amount of personal space has a certain meaning in one culture and a different meaning in another culture. Like learning a foreign language, customs and personal boundaries in a new culture are not to be "assumed" to be known, but must be learned for your safety.

THE ULTIMATE BOUNDARY – YOUR BODY

In some cultures, allowing a man to enter your house is symbolic of letting him enter your body. Many men have told women that they "assumed" she wanted sex just because she allowed entry into her house. Staying outside on the porch is a safer way to receive male guests. Where is the best place to entertain men in a safe way without misunderstandings where you live in the US? Where will the best place be to entertain men in a safe way without misunderstandings where you live/study abroad?

CONCEPT OF MALE FRIENDSHIP – A BOUNDARY MISUNDERSTANDING

American women are accustomed to the concept of male friendship. It has a meaning that may not translate in the new culture. Being seen with a man, talking with a man, going out with a man may have a different

"meaning" in the culture than a female student may intend. What does it mean in the culture you are in? Is that your intention? If no, change your behaviors to send the message you intend.

STROKES – FINDING DEEPER MEANING IN COMMUNICATION

Strokes are the measure of the exchange of communication between people. When interacting with others, we are constantly exchanging numbers of strokes. When we are communicating with peers, we tend to exchange a comparable number of strokes, a balanced exchange. In communication with those in authority however, the exchange may tend to not be balanced. The employee, for example, may tend to deliver more strokes than he/she receives from the boss. With friends, coworkers, spouse, children, authority figures, parents, strangers, strokes are delivered in varying amounts of balance or imbalance. Notice how this plays out in your life. Normally we are not aware of this measure of exchange as it operates at an unconscious level.

So it is, that when someone is being approached by a stranger or unwelcome individual, the amount of strokes should be kept to a minimum. In Latin culture, for instance, a man may sit next to a female student on a bus and begin an uninvited conversation with "Oh, baby. I love you." There is a tendency on some women's part to give a lecture on love to that individual ("How can you love me? You don't know me.", etc.)—providing a lot of strokes. Remember it's the number of strokes that are important, not the quality or content (negative or positive). This woman is then surprised to discover that the man continues and even escalates the harassment rather than moving away. It is more effective to:

- ✓ Ignore the harassment/pretend ignorance
- ✓ Feign confusion/lack of understanding
- ✓ Move away/remove yourself from the situation

Confrontations of any type serve to encourage harassers who want attention, even negative attention will do. It's important to know about the power of strokes. When people come at you with strokes that you don't want, don't give away any strokes in return. Don't offer explanations. Get up and move, say no, but do not equalize the number of strokes exchanged as it may only escalate into getting you into more trouble.

Notice how strokes play out in your life. Notice the relationships where strokes are not equal—where someone is giving you far more strokes than you are giving out, and notice how it feels inside. Does it make you uncomfortable? This is true in all kinds of relationships, and can be used to help identify predators.

Harassment behavior and language varies from one culture to another. How do men harass women in the culture in which you are visiting? How do national women in that culture deal with it? Notice their effectiveness and use their response as a model.

ASSERTIVENESS

<div> <div>Passive</div> <div>Assertive</div> <div>Aggressive</div> </div>		
Passive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Too Nice" • Suck it up • Hold it in • Denial • Subtle manipulation • Guilt • Powerless • Latent Hostility • Weak Boundaries - not setting personal limits 	Assertive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Firm" • Deliver messages clearly • "I" statements • "Broken record" technique (say "No, thank you" and then keep saying it over and over) • Good boundaries 	Aggressive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Mean" • Blow it out • Explode • Expressed Hostility • Overt Manipulation • Threats/Ultimatums • Guilt • Powerless/Out of control • Rigid boundaries

ACTIONS

Actions speak louder than words. Make sure your body language is congruent with your words. If you say no with a smile on your face or in a weak, unconvincing voice, the words lose their force and power. Say no firmly and swiftly and follow that up with removing yourself from the situation and getting assistance if needed to back you up.

PERSISTENT PEOPLE

Use the broken record technique when faced with a situation when someone will not take no for an answer. Do not be coerced into backing down from your position by the persistence of the person insisting. Just because they did not accept your "no" does not mean you now need to come up with another reason or excuse. Keep saying the same answer over and over again, without developing a new reason or excuse each time the other person doesn't accept it. You don't have to be creative. Stick to your answer and just don't budge.

Example:

"Would you like to go to the movies with me?"

"No, thank you. I can't go."

"Oh, come on. It's just a movie."

"No, thank you. I can't go."

"I'll get you home early. I'll be a perfect gentleman."

"No, thank you. I can't go."

"Oh, you're too good for me, is that it?"

"No, thank you. I can't go."

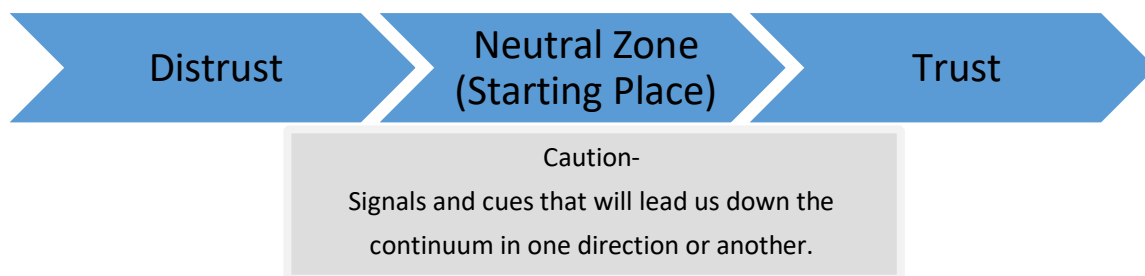
"Oh, you can't go?"

"No, thank you. I can't go."

"Oh."

TRUST

Continuum of Trust



Trust needs to be earned. Many people have the mistaken notion that people should be trusted until proven otherwise. Actually, it is prudent to stay in a neutral position about a person, neither trusting nor distrusting them at first. Gather information from this person that will help you determine the trustworthiness of the person. In a new culture, watch for clues and cues from people who know the person and figure out how trusted he/she is by the community.

HARRASSMENT BURN OUT

Harassing behavior is annoying at best and threatening and dangerous at worst. All students should seek assistance if harassment towards them becomes out of control and /or causes increased anxiety and anger. Many students reach a point, after which time they can no longer tolerate the catcalls on the street with

the same humor they had when they arrived in country. For some, the irritation escalates to anger and retaliation. Some students have acted out toward men on the street (yelling at them, insulting them, throwing things, hitting them) out of exasperation. This aggressive behavior is dangerous. It is a warning sign that needs to be addressed for your protection. It is very understandable that the harassment has "gotten to you," but exhibiting aggressive behavior back can put you at risk. This "burn out" is a signal that it's time to take a break. Get out of town. Take a vacation. Go talk to your teachers, staff, and/or counselor. Do some stress relieving exercises that work for you. Talk to someone. Do something different!

PREDATORS/PREY

In the wild, when an animal is either separated from the herd, is weak, young, injured, or otherwise vulnerable, it is likely that a predator will spot the animal, consider it prey and attack.

It is essential to your safety that you never allow yourself to be vulnerable to attack, that you avoid behaviors that can make you prey. You may have the right to walk down the beach at 2:00 in the morning, but if you do, you are making yourself prey to a waiting predator.

You may want to go to a bar or a party and have some fun, let off some steam, kick back and have a good time but if you drink alcohol or use any mood altering substance, you are now potential prey. It's as if you said to the strangers/acquaintances around you, "I'm going to relinquish control of myself/my body now. I put myself in your hands." Being at the effect of substances of any kind sets us up to be vulnerable to the attack of a predator.

It's not fair. Of course, it's not. But it's true—and staying in control of yourself can save your life. Being awake and aware allows you to pick up on warning signs that alert you that something is wrong. In the book, *The Gift of Fear*, Gavin deBecker describes the "gut feeling", the intuitive sense, that something is not right—that some danger may be present—as the gift of fear. Fear alerts us if we are awake and aware and respectful of the feelings we get. We must not override our sense of fear by saying to ourselves, "I don't know what I'm worried about, I'm sure nothing's wrong here", instead of paying attention to that little voice in our gut that says, "I don't know what's going on here, but something's up". It is really, really important to pay attention to our intuition, that little sense of knowing that something is amiss here, and not to dismiss it or deny it.

In his book, deBecker describes seven (7) ways that predators manipulate people to become prey. Learn all of these strategies so that you will not fall prey to them yourself. The tactics are:

- ✓ Forced teaming: intentional and directed manipulation to establish premature trust, example: "we're in this together"—a form of false rapport
- ✓ Charm and niceness: manipulative, deceptive, for self-gain
- ✓ Too many details: a tactic used when people are lying
- ✓ Typecasting: a slight insult designed to manipulate a woman to feel compelled to prove its inaccuracy
- ✓ Loan sharking: unsolicited giving designed to create a feeling of indebtedness
- ✓ The unsolicited promise: false promises
- ✓ Discounting the word "no": when someone refuses to accept "no" for an answer
- ✓ More about these tactics can be learned from reading the book, *The Gift of Fear*. It is a highly recommended resource for anyone wanting to be savvier about ways to protect themselves.

POTENTIAL PREDATOR BEHAVIOR – PROGRESSIVE INTRUSIVE INVASION OF BOUNDARIES

If in a situation there is someone giving you more attention that you want, or is finding excuses to touch you, this can be potentially dangerous to your safety. For example, a guy comes up to a woman and gently brushes his shoulder up against her, flipping her hair off her shoulder, grazing her hand. She's thinking, "This is creeping me out, but I'm sure I'm overreacting, I'm sure he doesn't mean anything." This is where danger begins. He is thinking, "How much will she tolerate and allow? How long can I get away with this without her calling me on it? How far can I go?"

Touch:

Uninvited, seemingly "unintentional" touching (brushing up against a woman's leg or arm, touching her hair)

Escalated touch:

If not acknowledged and objected to, the touch will escalate (hand on thigh, hand on arm, sitting very close)

Forced sense of indebtedness:

Creating a sense of indebtedness (buying an unsolicited drink or meal for example) and then expecting her attention in return (a dance, to walk her home, to spend time with her)

CONCLUSION

While some men are harassed, women experience the majority of sexual harassment and sexual assault. If you are a female student, this reality undoubtedly frustrates and angers you to have to be so very aware of your safety. If you are a male student, it likely dismays and angers you that women are ever treated disrespectfully.

There are steps to take to minimize risk in while travelling abroad and maximize fun and a rich cultural experience. It is important for women to:

- ✓ Integrate into their community
- ✓ Make friends with the women of the village
- ✓ Learn from the women about self-protection and practice what you learn
- ✓ Dress according to local customs
- ✓ Interact with men according to the local customs
- ✓ Behave according to the local customs
- ✓ Stay in control; staying sober and alert keeps your senses in place to protect you
- ✓ Have a buddy system: having at least one other person with you that you trust can help you in regular circumstances as well as in problematic situations (what if someone spikes your drink). It is generally a good idea to travel in groups
- ✓ Pay attention and respond to any inner signal (intuition) that "something isn't right" and remove yourself from the situation

Do not try to behave like you would in the States. You are here to experience a different way of life, one that allows you to assimilate into your village, to "join" the community, to have a full, rich cultural experience. Enjoy it. You are not giving up yourself—you, indeed, are expanding on your choices as a female. This article has been created as an invitation to you to be awake and aware and to acknowledge the realities of potential safety issues around you. To live your life as if this isn't so is to deny yourself adequate protection. Treat yourself well.

ORIENTATION OBJECTIVES

Orientation occurs during your first weeks in Costa Rica. You will participate in activities which are a combination of discussions, scavenger hunts, community gatherings, and traveling in and out of San José.

The purpose of orientation is:

- ✓ Learn about safety procedures.
- ✓ Get acquainted with one another.
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with the community in which you will be living.
- ✓ Discuss expectations and procedures for the four months of community living.
- ✓ Prepare you for a life-altering, faith-growing experience in another country and culture.
- ✓ Prepare for potential culture shock you may face.
- ✓ Equip you with the resources necessary to engage in the community and culture.
- ✓ Preparation for a rigorous academic schedule.
- ✓ Equip you with the knowledge to travel in and out of San José by yourselves, public transportation, and safety concerns.

A Prayer for Creation

O Lord, grant us the grace to grow deeper in our respect of
And care for your Creation.
Lord, hear our prayer.

O Lord, help us to recognize the sacredness of all of your
Creatures as signs of your wondrous love.
Lord, hear our prayer.

O Lord, help us turn from the selfish consumption of
Resources meant for all and to see the impacts of our
choices on the poor and vulnerable.
Lord, hear our prayer.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

QERC semester program participants will be in close contact with Latin Americans throughout the semester. It is important to remember that we are guests in their country as well as ambassadors for Christ; our behavior should reflect that. *It is we, not they, who must be flexible and willing, in many instances, to do things a different way.* We must be sensitive to their cultural and social mores and respect their way of doing things. Strive to develop an attitude of acceptance and understanding and be flexible, patient, and slow to criticize. Learning to see and do things in a different way is a crucial aspect of this program. We will be asking you to observe moral/ethical norms and standards observed by Latin American Christians in the different environments in which you will be studying. Their mores may require you to alter your normal activities. Students are expected to follow biblical principles concerning Christian conduct, including a willingness to subordinate one's own prerogatives for the benefit of the community and an earnest endeavor to avoid all expressions of racial and sexual discrimination.

DISCIPLINE & DISCHARGE

Violations of QERC PROCEDURES, UNIVERSITY LIFESTYLE COVENANT, and any behavior that constitutes a violation or threat to the safety and well-being of students of the QERC program and its members, or the community at large, will result in discipline that may range from warnings to termination of enrollment.

- ✓ Violations, which may result in immediate termination of enrollment, include:
- ✓ Violent behavior or threat of violence
- ✓ Possession and/or use of illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco products
- ✓ Physical or sexual harassment
- ✓ Fighting
- ✓ Willful destruction or careless use of tools or research equipment
- ✓ Leaving the QERC premises, or visiting areas without properly notifying the Field Station Manager or QERC Intern.
- ✓ Willful destruction of property or theft
- ✓ Insubordination to the Field Station Manager, QERC Intern, visiting faculty or other members of leadership

Be advised that the Quetzal Education Research Center may disclose information concerning a student's program participation, including any information concerning performance, attendance, discipline, participation, and suspected drug or alcohol use or other criminal activity, to a student's home university, parents, or legal guardians.

Upon receipt of a complaint about, or notice of such a violation of conduct, the QERC Field Station Manager(s) will provide the student with notice of the complaint or alleged violation and give an opportunity for the student to be heard. Following this, the Field Station Manager(s) will attempt to communicate, consult and coordinate with the Director of QERC and the student life official at the student's home institution. Following these discussions, the Director of QERC will make a decision with respect to the appropriate disciplinary response and will inform the students and the senior student life official at the home campus of that decision. The Director of QERC's decision will be final unless the student chooses to make a verbal appeal to the SNU Provost.

UNIVERSITY LIFESTYLE POLICIES

The Quetzal Education Research Center (QERC) is sponsored and operated by Southern Nazarene University (SNU). The policies regarding lifestyle choices while attending QERC are consistent with those of SNU.

The areas of personal responsibility in the University Lifestyle Covenant are not regarded as moral absolutes, but they are responsibilities of all members of the Quetzal Education Research Center. These guidelines help us live together in a Christ-centered, wisdom community and are intended to strike an important balance between individual autonomy and community responsibility. These guidelines embody such foundational Christian principles as self-control, avoidance of harmful practices, and sensitivity to the heritage and practices of others. The University requires members of its community to abstain from tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, gambling, social dancing, and attendance at establishments or activities at which such behaviors are the focus.

While we understand that not every person holds the same convictions, we expect members of our community to understand why we have these guidelines. We expect individual integrity and cooperative efforts. We hope all members of our community will discuss and evaluate the University standards during their time at QERC.

From the SNU student handbook, QERC acknowledges and supports the following lifestyle covenant:

SNU Lifestyle Covenant

Convinced that clear and healthy parameters are essential for a Christian community in order for it to thrive,

Expecting that each person who enrolls at SNU respects the importance of these healthy parameters,

Affirming the value of living as a people with strong character who positively influence culture in specifically Christian ways,

We, the students, faculty, and staff of Southern Nazarene University, as a Christian community willingly embrace the following values and the guidelines they create as reflected in the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene.

Your initial by each statement represents your understanding of and commitment to abide by that value and guideline.

- _____ 1. We value honesty; therefore, avoiding deceit, cheating, and plagiarism is expected.
- _____ 2. We value the use of positive, wholesome, and edifying language; therefore, refraining from profanity, vulgarity, and gossip is expected.
- _____ 3. We value self-control that results in physical and mental well-being; therefore, abstaining from the use or possession of intoxicants (including, but not limited to, tobacco, marijuana, alcoholic beverages, drugs) is expected; for the same reason appropriate and modest clothing is expected.
- _____ 4. We value sexual purity and the sanctity of Christian marriage; therefore, abstaining from sexual immorality (including, but not limited to, premarital or extramarital sex, other immoral sexual activity, and homosexual behavior) is expected; for the same reason, abstaining from viewing or possessing pornography is expected.
- _____ 5. We value discernment and wise decision making; therefore, avoiding environments that could lead to behavior detrimental to our success is expected; for the same reason making choices that are consistent with the values expressed in this covenant is expected.
- _____ 6. We value respect for authority and for the persons in authority on our campus and in our community; therefore, compliance with federal, state and local laws and with the policies and procedures of the SNU Student Handbook is expected.
- _____ 7. We value our faith community and the Christian practices of corporate worship, biblical teaching, prayer and fellowship; therefore, expressing our commitment to Christ and to each other through regular chapel attendance, mutual encouragement, support and accountability is expected.

While we recognize that not every individual holds the same degree of conviction on a given expectation or commitment, we as a community commit to living within the parameters of this covenant at all times, whether on or away from campus. Those who act outside of these parameters will be subject to review and disciplinary consequences as stated in the SNU Student Handbook (www.snu.edu/handbook).

I have read, understood and now commit to live within the parameters of the SNU Lifestyle Covenant.

Print Name

Signature

Date