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**Sustainable Development in Central America:
Poverty, Inequality, and Growth in Nicaragua
Syllabus, Summer 2012**

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Sponsored by the Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAI), Deputy Provost Dr. Richard Holder, and Dante DiGregorio, from Anderson School of Management, through a Title VI-B Grant and the Department of Sociology at Adams State College.

Where: Nicaragua

When: May 22nd - June 15th, 2011

6 total possible credit hrs as:

Soc 379: Topics in Latin American Development
Soc 479: Seminar in Central American Culture

Possible Cross-list with:

Political Science, Business, History, etc.

What: This program explores the economics of development in Nicaragua, the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Nicaragua is a country blessed with majestic landscapes, beautiful beaches, quaint colonial cities, and an abundance of natural resources. Yet, throughout its history, the country has suffered severe underdevelopment.

This course takes a hands-on approach to understand failed development and economic growth, poverty, and the deep social inequalities that affect our world and most importantly, on solutions to these social problems. We will travel deep into the northern Nicaraguan mountains, visit housing projects in squatters' communities (i.e., slums), meet with microfinance organizations, talk with workers at rural medical outposts and hospitals and visit education facilities. We will talk to, and get lectures from community organizers, Nicaraguan scholars, and International Aid Agencies.

We will also go to the Caribbean coast, where we will have the chance to compare and contrast Nicaragua's dominate *mestizo* culture, with the country's often forgotten, creole-speaking Afro and native populations located on the Atlantic coast. Volunteering opportunities will also be available for ambitious students.

There are special scholarships available for funding, and standard scholarships qualify for tuition. Knowledge of Spanish is *not* required.

Course Requirements:

Prior to the trip, we will have a few class meetings where we will go over assigned readings, lay the foundations for the course, and get organized for the trip.

While in Nicaragua, we will meet daily in the mornings for field trips, guest lectures, visits, etc. In the evenings we will meet in our classroom at a quaint colonial house called Casa Azul, where we will look deeper into the theories of Economic Development, as they relate to what we observed that day.

You will be required to keep a daily journal, where you will record events, your observations and thoughts. If you are taking 3 credit hrs, at the end of the trip, and based on your journal, you will write a reflection paper expanding on what you learned, your experiences, feelings, and thoughts. That paper is due two weeks after we return from our trip.

If you are taking 6 credit hrs, or if you are a grad student, you will also be required to choose a specific topic of interest, and develop that into a well researched paper, that gathers your thoughts, data, and relevant literature. Examples of such topics may be "Child Labor in Nicaragua", "Nicaragua's Coffee", "Microfinance Organizations as a Method to Fight Poverty in Nicaragua", etc. This paper is due four weeks after we return from our trip. Both papers should be 12-20 pages, Times New Roman 12pt, 1.5 line spacing, 1 inch margins.

Costs:

- **Scholarships.** Need-based scholarships may cover the entire costs of the trip. There are four study abroad scholarships of \$500 each available through the Sociology Dept. These scholarships will be awarded to the four individuals with the most competitive applications. In addition, the Financial Aid office will increase your loan maximum for

the spring semester, to cover your airfare and fees for this class. If you talk to Financial Aid early (ASAP), they may also be able to help you qualify for other grants/scholarships. Applicants should schedule a meeting with Philip Schroeder (pschroeder@adams.edu), the director of Financial Aid.

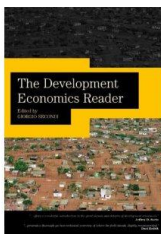
- **Tuition**, 3 or 6 credit hrs. Regular scholarships apply. If you have a tuition scholarship, it will pay your tuition in full (up to 20 credit hrs).
- **Airfare**. Students will purchase their own plane tickets. Some students may travel from other cities, or may choose to fly earlier to study Spanish in Granada. Some may choose to stay longer, and/or travel back to the US by land.
- **Course Fees**: \$1,800. This will cover the entire costs for the 3 1/2 weeks in Nicaragua, including homestays, all meals, hotels, airplanes, buses and boats within Nicaragua, short field trips, and guest speaker's honoraria.

Organization:

We will have 4 meetings before the trip. (Time and place TBA.) Meetings will include mandatory ASC orientation, lectures, and we will discuss all organizational matters. You need a **valid passport through January 2013**. If you don't have one, you need to apply for one immediately. You will fill out forms, show proof of insurance, or purchase extremely cheap travel insurance (\$32) for the trip. You will sign waiver forms that say that, while we expect nothing to happen (Nicaragua is the safest country in Latin America, with the friendliest people!) you understand that travelling may be risky. You will be warned not to do stupid things (like getting too drunk and missing the boat the next day), etc.

Reading List

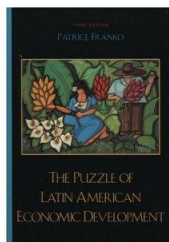
Suggested books to buy:



The Development Economics Reader, edited by G. Secondi, Routledge, 2008.

<http://www.amazon.com/Development-Economics-Reader-Giorgio-Secondi/dp/0415771579/>

This book is a wonderful compilation of short papers by the leading scholars in the sub-fields of Economic Development. 42 papers on Human Development, Growth, Geography, Institutions, Governance, Inequality, Poverty, Health, Child Labor, Education, Sustainable Development, Globalization, Microfinance, etc. The index and selected chapters are on my website.



The Puzzle of Latin American Economic Development, P. Franko, Rowman & Littlefield, third ed., 2007.

<http://www.amazon.com/Puzzle-Latin-American-Economic-Development/dp/0742553531/>

The second edition, which is almost the same thing, except for the cover, is \$3.05. <http://www.amazon.com/Puzzle-Latin-American-Economic-Development/dp/0742524663>

The index and selected chapters are on my website.

*** Readings before we go:**

* Ch 4. Skidmore, T. Smith, P. and J. Green, (2010). *Modern Latin America*. Oxford University Press. (on WebCt).

Very brief history, read before we get there (read Central American part and Nicaragua – skip Caribbean and other countries).

Chs. 2, 12, 13, 14 optional reading.

* Chs 1, 2. *The Puzzle of Latin American Economic Development*, P. Franko, Rowman & Littlefield, third ed., 2007. (on WebCt).

Ch1 is on Development in Latin America, and Ch2 is on Historical (Economic) Legacies.

The rest of the book has great chapters on many topics we'll be discussing.

Additional Readings:

Historical Overview:

Walker, Thomas. Nicaragua: Living in the Shadow of the Eagle, Chapters 1-7.

* If pressed for time, be sure to read Chapter 4.

Historical view of Nicaragua from the pre-colonial period through the post-Sandinista period.

Zimmerman, Matilde. Sandinista: Carlos Fonseca and the Nicaraguan Revolution

* Introduction and Chapter 1 (read before Matagalpa).

Great discussion on the Matagalpa region and the social factors that pushed individuals, like Carlos Fonseca, to rebel against the Somoza regime. Crucial reading before going to the northern mountains.

Paige, Jeffery. Coffee and Power. (read before going to north)

* Introduction and chapters on Nicaragua.

Excellent account of how the coffee industry has driven economic development in Central American countries. This is an incredible book. Paige does a good job of using charts and graphs that summarize his main arguments well, so you may want to read the introduction and the Nicaragua chapters and then look over the main charts throughout the book.

Booth, John A. The Beginning of the End. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 and 9

Good historical account of what led to the Nicaraguan revolution.

Barry, Tom. Land and Hunger in Central America. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

This is a quick read on agrarian reform issues in Central America.

This is good material to go through before going up to Northern Nicaragua.

Walker and Booth. Understanding Central America. Chapters 1, 2 and 3.

Good discussion of similarities and differences across the Central American region.

Economics:

Ray, Debraj. Development Economics.

The best undergraduate book on Development Economic Theory.

Meier, Gerald & Rauch, James. Leading Issues in Economic Development. 8th Edition.

A compilation of leading academic articles. Similar to the book edited by Secondi, but at the Grad level.

Any basic Intro to Macro book. Eg. Hubbard & O'Brien, Macroeconomics.