



SAN SALVADOR, EL SALVADOR

Casa de la Solidaridad is an academic initiative between the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU), the University of Central America (UCA) in El Salvador, and Santa Clara University. The mission of the Casa is the promotion of justice and solidarity through the creation of a meaningful academic experience where you can integrate rigorous academic study with direct immersion with the poor of El Salvador. Each semester, an outstanding group of students live together in a learning community near the University of Central America. You do not have to be Catholic or Christian to participate in the Casa de la Solidaridad, but you must be open to reflection on the spiritual and religious dimensions of life. This experience offers you many opportunities for personal and shared reflection, spiritual development, and collaborative academic learning. And you'll have the chance to talk with and learn from policy makers and business leaders, academic and religious leaders, human rights activists and community organizers, members of women's organizations and union workers, and the poor and the marginalized of El Salvador.

Dedicated to fostering "men and women for others," Casa de la Solidaridad is a unique living and learning environment. Here you can develop your intellectual potential, strengthen your ethical and religious values, and learn to become a socially responsible global citizen. The mission of the Casa is the promotion of justice and solidarity through the creation of a meaningful academic experience where you can integrate rigorous academic study with direct immersion with the poor of El Salvador. The program draws inspiration from the lives of the six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter who were murdered at the University of Central America (UCA) on November 16, 1989 and from all the people of El Salvador who suffered during the civil war, especially those who were killed in their struggle for solidarity and social justice. Because of its dramatic recent history, its current stability, and its rich human resources, Salvadoran society is an ideal place for you to experience issues that confront residents of developing countries - the vast majority of the world's citizens today.

Admissions: You will need the following admission requirements before applying: minimum of intermediate level of Spanish proficiency (*minimum of two years college-level Spanish preferred*), you should be a junior or senior during the time you will be with the Casa, minimum of 2.75 GPA, openness to Ignatian Spirituality and community-based living, ability to be sensitive to and embrace cultural diversity, and willingness to live simply in the context of a developing country. In order to enroll in the program, students must send in (1) an application form, (2) an official transcript, (3) two letters of recommendation (one must be from a Spanish professor), and (4) a study abroad advisor's form (completed by the Study abroad Coordinator at SLU). If you're planning to apply, please pick up an application packet at the International Center, DuBourg Hall 150.

Language of Instruction: Spanish.

Scholarships: ALL SLU scholarships will go with the student.

More Info: For more information, please go to the web site at <http://www.scu.edu/casa/index.cfm>

Immersion Experience: The Casa de la Solidaridad is an opportunity for you to immerse yourself in "la realidad" of El Salvador on many levels. Your field placement, however, will be one of the most important parts of your immersion experience. After we talk with you about your academic background, personal interests, and professional goals, we will pair you up with a fellow classmate and give you a field placement in a local Salvadoran marginal community. You will work for two full days each week with that community for the entire semester. Through this learning environment, you will become more aware of and sensitive to the realities of those who are struggling to end social injustices while working to promote human dignity. You will become part of the Salvadoran society not as a volunteer, but as a learner.

Community Living: The Casa de la Solidaridad is an actual house, or casa, located in within walking distance of the University of Central America. The building we are housed in used to be a religious residence, and is designed to be very conducive to group living. The Casa contains eight shared bedrooms, two bathrooms, a community garden area for reflection and gatherings, a central dining room, as well as a library and living room. Upon arrival, all the students will be invited to help create their community environment by talking about and agreeing upon a variety of community norms such as simple living, community and spirituality nights, speaking Spanish while at home in the Casa, and much more. This type of living is an opportunity to enter fully with other students into the richness of community life. In addition to the Casa students, a Community Facilitator lives on-site full time. As part of the community living experience, three UCA scholarship students ("*becarios*") live at the Casa. The *becarios* provide students the opportunity to develop relationships, improve Spanish skills, and serve as a link between Casa students and the students at the UCA who are on special scholarship ("*beca*") through the Romero Pastoral Center. These scholarships are given to students with limited resources and who demonstrate a strong commitment to working for justice in their communities. Most importantly, this living arrangement offers students another means to learn more about the Salvadoran reality. The Casa becomes a lively community each semester with connections between the Casa students and the wider community of Salvadoran *becario* students.

Program Goals:

Education for Transformation

Casa de la Solidaridad expands your imagination, broadens your worldview, and provides an international dimension to your academic disciplines.

Education for Global Citizenship

Casa de la Solidaridad fosters global understanding and peaceful cooperation between North and Central America while challenging your perceptions about global justice and human liberation.

Education for Lifelong Learning and Service

Casa de la Solidaridad challenges you to continue your constructive engagement with the world when you return to the United States and throughout your life.

Institutional Solidarity

Casa de la Solidaridad fosters institutional links across the North/South social-political divide in order to promote a variety of forms of collaboration in the hopes of creating a more just world.