

ASB Winter 2011 Class on Childhood Poverty in Ecuador Culminating in a Spring Break Trip to Quito, Ecuador

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Goal

Participants will be introduced to childhood poverty in both international and domestic settings. We will also look at the affect that poverty can have on youth education and development. At the end of the class, participants should have a better understanding of why childhood poverty exists, what can be done to combat it, and what is currently being done to alleviate children from poverty. The course culminates in a week-long trip to Quito, Ecuador, where students will have an opportunity to work directly with children affected by poverty. The trip will also give participants insight into poverty-combating approaches being utilized by an organization in Quito.

Expectations

This course will be graded Pass/Fail, and attendance at all classes is mandatory. Your grade will be determined by participation (50%), weekly responses and assignments (20%) and a final project (30%).

Each weekly three-hour meeting will be discussion based, and input and debate mediation is encouraged from all participants.

During week 10, participants will present their final projects. This will take the form of a short, 10-15 minute dialogue delivered in pairs about an area of life in Quito that particularly interests you. Ideas include, but are not limited to: the education system, effects of childhood poverty, etc.

Schedule

ALL READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE ON THE WEEK THEY ARE ASSIGNED

Week One:

- Course introduction
- Group goal setting
- Get to know your ASBuddies activity
- Overview of ASB

Week Two

- Introduction to youth development and education
- How does poverty affect childhood development?
- The importance of education

Reading:

- Duncan, G. J. and Brooks-Gunn, J. (2000). Family Poverty, Welfare Reform, and Child Development. Child Development, 71: 188–196.

- Duncan, G. J., Brooks-Gunn, J. and Klebanov, P. K. (1994). Economic Deprivation and Early Childhood Development. *Child Development*, 65: 296–318.
- Petterson, S. M. and Albers, A. B. (2001). Effects of Poverty and Maternal Depression on Early Child Development. *Child Development*, 72: 1794–1813.

Assignment Due: Write a 1-2 page description of your interest in signing up for a class about youth development and poverty. What experiences have you had in the past that made you interested in the topic? What are you looking forward to in this course and the trip to Ecuador during Spring Break?

Week Three

- Youth development and poverty issues in Ecuador

Reading:

- Cunningham, G. “The Jambi Kiwa Story: Mobilizing Assets for Community Development in Ecuador.” *From Clients to Citizens: Communities Changing the Course of their Own Development*. Ed. Cunningham, G., and Mathie, A. (UK: Practical Action Publishing, 2008): 85.

Assignment Due: Write 1-2 pages about the reading. What struck you the most? What questions arose from the text? How do you think this article relates to the work we will potentially be doing abroad in Ecuador, if at all?

Week Four

- Introduction to Ecuador, Quito, and South America
- Latin American history, culture, and customs
- Volunteer organizations in Ecuador (NGOs and international)
- Watch Ecuador video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZP0iIPCoPkY>

Reading:

- 2009 Human Development Report – Ecuador
- Gerlach, Allen. (2003). *Indians, Oil, and Politics: A recent history of Ecuador. Introduction.*

Assignment Due: Write 1-2 pages that answer the questions: Why Ecuador? What are you most excited about for the trip? What knowledge or assumptions do you have about Ecuador? What questions do you have about Quito or Ecuador in general? What culture barriers do you think will be the most difficult to overcome?

Week Five

- Service learning vs. Volunteering
- Can we help? Will our contributions be sustainable?
- What expectations should we have?
- What role do outsiders play?
- Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)

Reading:

- Furco, Andrew. (1996). "Service-Learning: A Balanced Approach to Experiential Education".
- Illich, Ivan. (1968). "To hell with good intentions". *An address made by Illich in 1968 to a group of students planning to head to Mexico for a volunteer trip.*
- Kretzmann, John P. and McKnight, John L., Introduction. *Building Communities from the Inside Out* (ACTA Publications, 1993), pp. 1-11.

Assignment Due: Write 1-2 pages detailing your opinion on how we can help when we are in Ecuador during Spring Break? Do we have a right to show up as outsiders and try to help? Reference the articles assigned for this week to address how we can best approach service learning in our one week in Ecuador. Do you think there will be an opportunity for ABCD work?

Week Six

- Reform practices
- What is being done to help reduce the negative effects that poverty can have on youth?
- What has been successful in the past? What has not had success?

Reading:

- Collier, Paul & Dollar, David. (2001). "Can the World Cut Poverty in Half? How Policy Reform and Effective Aid Can Meet International Development Goals". World Bank, Washington.
- Grindle, Merilee. (2004). "Good enough governance: poverty reduction and reform in developing countries". Governance. Volume 17, Issue 4. Pages 528-548.

Assignment Due: Write 1-2 pages about your thoughts on reducing poverty? Should there be a push for more international aid and support, or should individual countries be encouraged to tackle their own problems?

Week Seven

- Youth development and poverty issues exist here in the US too
- What opportunities exist to learn and work with these types of issues domestically?
- Benefits/Drawbacks of volunteering domestically/internationally

Reading:

- Astin AW, Sax LJ. (1998). How undergraduates are affected by service participation. *J. Coll. Stud. Dev.* 39:251-63.
- Obama, Barack. *Illinois Issues*. (1988). "Why Organize?" A publication of the University of Springfield-Illinois. Chapter 2.

Assignment Due: Write a 1-2 page reaction to the fact that poverty and youth development issues exist here in the US too. How can we use our experience in Ecuador to possibly address similar issues in the US?

Week Eight

- Introduction to our site (Ecuador Volunteer)
- History, mission statement, past projects, current initiatives
- What to expect

- Note: our organization will most likely have a one/two day orientation. We can get some of the material they would use to cut down on the orientation time and maximize our time working and volunteering

Reading: Materials provided by Ecuador Volunteer (note: we will use this material in our class as part of the agreement to cut down orientation days from 2 to 1 when we are in country)

Assignment Due: Write a 1-2 page reaction to the reading. Include your preliminary thoughts on the organization and work they do, and mention personal and group goals you have for the trip.

Week Nine

- Trip logistics
- What to expect, how to take advantage of our short time in Ecuador
- Adjusting to culture shock
- Final project details

Assignment Due: Work on final project

Week Ten

- Final project presentations
- Last minute trip details/Questions

Assignment Due: Final Project