

Social Entrepreneur Corps in Ecuador

*Monday, May 29, 2017 – Friday, July 21, 2017
(May 29 – June 24 online; June 25 – July 21 in Ecuador)*

THE PROGRAM

The U21 Social Entrepreneur Corps in Ecuador program builds on the expertise U21 institutions have to offer in social entrepreneurship, online and blended learning, international collaboration, service learning, and a common commitment to global citizenship.

Individual U21 Member institutions already offer study abroad programs on the topic of social entrepreneurship, and some with Ecuador as the program destination. The proposed U21 Social Entrepreneur Corps program differs from existing offerings in that it is a tailored approach to study abroad that combines global collaboration, new technologies and impact-oriented learning activities.

During the fieldwork phase of this program, students will be placed with Social Entrepreneur Corps, a social enterprise that effectively utilizes **social entrepreneurship** as an international development approach in Latin America. Students will work directly with Social Entrepreneur Corps field professionals and social entrepreneurs in Ecuador to help establish new, and grow existing, micro-consignment supported businesses.

The benefits include exposure to economic theories of social entrepreneurship and active engagement with case study analyses, Spanish language, and Ecuador and Incan culture. The students will experience living with the local families and working intensively with community service organizations, and local social entrepreneurs. Our students will make a tangible difference in people's lives, while also acquiring the knowledge, skills, and habits necessary to become socially aware, active global citizens. The program is designed as a short-term summer (June/July) opportunity for U21 students. U21 students are encouraged, but not required to, take this program for academic credit. This program aims to complement other U21 student activities.

NOMINATION PROCESS:

Each U21 institution is invited to submit two guaranteed and up to four ranked reserve student nominations using the nomination form found on the UConn Education Abroad website. The form will be emailed to each university's U21 Student Mobility Representative along with the password to access it.

TARGET POPULATION

The past summer spent in Ecuador was the best summer I ever had. I was given to venture into an entirely different environment from what I am used to back home in Singapore. It was a wonderful experience working with students from various parts of the world. Each of us brought to the table our own life experiences and knowledge from our respective fields of study. This diversity gave me a chance to contribute what I could and helped me discover many ways I could still grow and learn in - it was nothing short of a humbling experience. Most of all, being given the chance to homestay with locals allowed me to fully immerse myself in the Ecuadorian lifestyle while forging deep relationships with the locals we were working with. Although the locals I met had rather different lived realities from my own, I saw how we were actually more similar in all our hopes and dreams than we liked to realise. I left Ecuador with new friends from all over the world and a fresh perspective on humanity and these are things I will treasure for a lifetime!

*2016 U21 SEC in Ecuador
Student Participant*

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- ♦ Undergraduate student currently enrolled in a Universitas 21 member institution
- ♦ Class status: 2nd Year, 3rd Year, 4th+ Year
- ♦ Academic area: all
- ♦ Recommended GPA: 3.4 (US) or equivalent
- ♦ Working Language:
 - Instruction will be primarily in English
 - Fieldwork will be primarily in Spanish (intensive instruction on site). Prior knowledge of Spanish is helpful, but by no means mandatory.
- ♦ Proven interest in international development work
- ♦ Nominated as potential participant by the home university

SELECTION CRITERIA (EVALUATED THROUGH ESSAY AND INTERVIEW):

- ♦ Strong motivation for participation
- ♦ Proven ability to work independently and as part of a team
- ♦ Strong interest in helping to empower others
- ♦ Ability to empathize with individuals of diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds
- ♦ Open-mindedness
- ♦ Flexibility
- ♦ Willingness to work hard under challenging developing country conditions
- ♦ Sense of humour

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

All nominated students (guaranteed and reserves) will be invited to complete an online application through the University of Connecticut's study abroad application system. Applications must include a CV and a two-page essay detailing their motivation, experience and expectations in relation to the program.

Skype interviews will be conducted with selected applicants. Acceptance letters will be sent out by April 22, 2016.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

This program can be credit bearing, according to each university's policy. UConn will assign six credits to this program.

PRE-DEPARTURE: MAY 29 – JUNE 24, 2017

The students will join a U21 Virtual Global Classroom, where they will learn about Social Entrepreneurship and Ecuadorian Politics and Culture.

Participation in the pre-departure phase is compulsory for the continuation of the program.

IN-COUNTRY ORIENTATION AND FOUNDATION BUILDING: JUNE 25 – JULY 2, 2017

Upon arrival in the country, all students spend the first segment of their time in Cuenca, participating in orientation sessions, living with local families, studying Spanish intensively, participating in development discussions, visiting nearby development and relief organizations and participating in project content and technical training.

FIELD WORK: JULY 3 – JULY 17, 2017

Students travel to Zamora and visit different satellite work sites, staying with additional local families, in group living settings and/or in hotels. Students will work with Peace Corps Volunteers, local community service organizations, and local businesses.

CONCLUSION, DELIVERY AND PRESENTATION: JULY 17 – JULY 20, 2017

All participants return to the Social Entrepreneur Corps headquarters site in Cuenca for the final days of the program. At this time the projects are completed and presented, Spanish evaluations are conducted and participants stay with the local families one last time.

ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed based on news analyses while in Ecuador, and reflections on experience and final presentation at the end of the trip.

TIMELINE

Nomination deadline: Friday, March 24, 2017

Online application deadline: Friday, April 7, 2017

Application review and Skype interviews: Monday, April 10 – Friday, April 17, 2017

Decision date: Monday, April 20, 2017

Commitment deadline: Monday, April 27, 2017

Online classes: Monday, May 29, 2017 – Saturday, June 24, 2017

Ecuador arrival: Sunday, June 25, 2017

Final Presentations: Monday, July 17–Thursday, July, 20, 2017

Ecuador departure: Friday, July 21, 2017

PROGRAM FEES

USD \$3,650 per student, not including airfare, visa costs and health insurance.

CONTACT

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