International Immersion:
Making global-to-local connections
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Immersion Trip Details

- Over winter break 2014
- Served with St. Martin de Porres parish in Belize City
- 13 students, all academic years and many different majors
- 4 pre-trip meetings, 1 post-trip and 1 post-trip service day
- Sponsored by the CSCE, Campus Ministry, JCSB Service Leadership Program, School of Education
- Innovation Grant supported the participation of Dr. Jami Curley, Associate Professor of Social Work

Belize Pre-Trip Self-Reflection

Name: ________________________________

One purpose of SLU’s Mission Trips is to promote opportunities for self-reflection and personal growth. The spirit of the following set of self-ratings is to help gauge where each of you are in your personal development on the issues that we will all encounter on our trip to Belize City. Try to be honest with yourselves—these won’t be used to judge or evaluate you! But, we will ask you these same questions following our trip and encourage you to discuss how you think you have grown from our experiences together. Please circle your responses.

How open are you to experiencing new cultures and diverse people?

1 2 3 4 5
(Not Very) (Extremely)

How deep is your interest in the topic of urban poverty and institutional inequality?

1 2 3 4 5
(Not Very) (Extremely)

How important to you is volunteering to serve others in your community?

1 2 3 4 5
(Not Very) (Extremely)

How relevant have your SLU experiences been in shaping your commitments to community service?

1 2 3 4 5
(Not Very) (Extremely)

How committed are you to advocating for the rights of vulnerable or marginalized people?

1 2 3 4 5
(Not Very) (Extremely)

How empowered do you feel to positively change your community and promote social justice?

1 2 3 4 5
(Not Very) (Extremely)

How deeply connected is your spiritual life with your concerns for marginalized or underserved people?

1 2 3 4 5
(Not Very) (Extremely)

How central is your faith in setting personal priorities and making important decisions?

1 2 3 4 5
(Not Very) (Extremely)

How impactful have your SLU experiences been in promoting your spiritual growth?

1 2 3 4 5
(Not Very) (Extremely)

Is there anything you would like to share regarding your expectations for personal growth? Please elaborate.
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Going to Belize, I don't think I realized just how impactful the trip would really be.

Knowing that we set the basis of a partnership that will, hopefully, continue for many years to come is much more gratifying in the sense that I know we didn't just for there to help them for two weeks.

We may have helped them, but I feel like more than anything they helped me gain an entirely different perspective.

I'd become frustrated with myself, questioning whether this was the “fixing” we so badly wanted to do, but wasn't appropriate for this particular setting.

What brought us to Belize, though, is the reflection by the people there and how they realized they needed to improve the sake of their people.

It was easy to shut down the family and see them as part of the problem, but it took understanding to try to view the situation from their perspective and find a way to work with them towards a solution.

I feel that I now have a better understanding of the importance of a community in order to feel safe, as well as to live a happy, loving life. Without having a community of people you trust and know, it will be much harder to truly be yourself and keep your values and traditions alive.