



Spring 2017 Guidebook



Welcome Comunidad 23! We are excited to see you soon in Santiago! We've created this guidebook, or *guía*, as a comprehensive guide to everything you need to know about your semester in the Dominican Republic. We hope that you spend some time with your family and friends looking it over as you prepare to depart. We hope that you also talk to friends who have done the program, email any questions to the Global Engagement Office or the Encuentro Dominicano Academic and Student Life Directors. Also, please check out our blog, Facebook page, and website to get a full idea of what your semester will be like.

We've included lots of information in the *guía* so that you and your family have one place to get all of your questions answered. That being said, we realize that preparing for a semester abroad can be overwhelming and that some of you may not have the time to pore over every word. For your convenience, we've separated out what we consider to be the essential information. While we encourage you to look at the whole *guía* to understand the rich history of Encuentro and ILAC and get a taste of the local culture, we consider it **essential** to read these first pages.

We look forward to meeting you soon, and hope that all your preparations go smoothly to set you up for a great semester. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with either of us with any questions you might have. ¡Hasta pronto!

Sincerely,

Margarita Dubocq
Academic Director

margaritadubocq@creighton.edu
Dominican Cell (829) 333-6164

Kat Turco
Student Life Director

katturco@creighton.edu
402-253-7517



The Essential Info

Preparing Yourself for the Program – The Semester Before:

Academics

During the semester preceding your Encuentro Dominicano participation, you will work with the Dean's Office and the On-Campus Encuentro Director to facilitate your Encuentro course registration. Encuentro Dominicano Academic Director, Margarita Dubocq, is the University's academic officer on site in the Dominican Republic. All academic questions and concerns should go to her. Encuentro Dominicano students DO NOT have to complete the *Study Abroad Approval Form*.

Travel Documentation

Be sure to sign and return all required forms and documentation to the Global Engagement Office (GEO) before you leave. **You will not get academic credit if your forms are not turned in.** Forms may be obtained online at <http://www.creighton.edu/geo/forms/>

Passports and Visas

By this time, you'll most likely have your passport. If not, get it immediately. If you have a passport, check the expiration date and make sure that it is valid for at least six months after you plan to return to the United States. Make sure that your passport, even though valid, has at least 4 empty pages. For detailed information on obtaining or renewing your passport, go to the following website: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

As soon as you receive your passport, make sure to sign the first page. Take extra copies of your passport and passport photos with you in case your passport is lost or stolen. Keep the copies separate from your original passport. If your passport is lost or stolen, notify the Student Life Director and then the local authorities as well as the U.S. Embassy immediately.

If you are NOT a US citizen, you must check with the Dominican embassy for travel rules. Please visit <http://www.domrep.org/> or call 202-332-6280 or 202-939-0971.

Travel Arrangements

For current Creighton students, flights should be arranged through the Global Engagement Office to take advantage of GEO paying for a round trip flight. For visiting students, please shop around for the best flight costs. For example, call STA TRAVEL at 1-800-226-8624 or visit www.studentuniverse.com for student rates. It is suggested that you check with a local travel agent to compare prices and find the best deals. Regardless if you are a current Creighton student or a student participating from partner university, all students should arrive in Santiago on the date according to the schedule provided.

Medical Forms

Before you leave, have a physical exam with your regular physician, and talk with him or her about prescribing some medicines for you to take with you, possibly including medications for motion sickness, or antibiotics, especially if you are prone to respiratory or urinary infections.

All Creighton students studying abroad are required to complete the *Health History/Health Clearance Form* prior to departure. The information provided on these forms is confidential. A physician must sign the *Health History/Health Clearance Form*.

Medical Conditions

It is extremely important to get prescriptions filled in advance if you have any chronic health conditions for which you take regular medication (for example, diabetes, asthma, heart problems, depression, allergies, etc.). If possible, take enough medication with you to last the entire time you will be away. If you give yourself shots (insulin, allergy shots, “EpiPens” for allergic reactions), carry a letter from your physician that justifies your possession of needles and/or syringes.

If you do have a chronic health condition, wear a tag or bracelet identifying that condition and be sure that the Student Life Director knows where your medication is. Please also keep emergency instructions for administering the medication in an easy-to-see place with the medication, in case you are unable to tell someone else what you need. If you use electronic equipment to monitor a health condition (for example, glucose monitors for diabetes), be sure you have plenty of batteries. Also ask your doctor about possible changes in medication amounts, considering you will probably be under some stress, especially during your early adjustment period in your new environment.

***Always pack medications in a carry-on bag, not in your checked luggage, which may get lost or separated from you. ALWAYS KEEP MEDICATIONS IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER, with the prescription information on the container.**

Dental and Eye Care

Have a dental check-up and have any needed dental work completed before you leave.

Be sure that you carry your prescription for glasses or contacts with you; the best idea is to have a second pair in case of loss or breakage. If you wear contacts, it is our recommendation that you bring a pair of glasses to use in case of eye infections and/or unsanitary conditions. You may also want to ask your eye doctor to prescribe some antibiotic eye drops for possible infections.

Immunizations

Encuentro Dominicano requires students to abide by all health-related guidelines specified by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), as well as those provided by the US State Department through its consular information. Make an appointment with your doctor to discuss or obtain the required vaccinations. It is also important to be sure that all of your current vaccinations (tetanus, diphtheria, polio, measles, etc.) are up to date. Be aware that some immunizations need to be started months in advance of your departure. **It is very important to obtain all vaccinations BEFORE leaving for the DR.** Here is a list of the CDC’s current immunization requirements for the Dominican Republic:

- Hepatitis A and B
- Typhoid
- Rabies (please consult with your physician regarding this immunization)
- Malaria Prophylaxis

***Please note that these recommendations are subject to change. Please consult the CDC website prior to travel. wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/dominican-republic.htm**

Travel Insurance

You must purchase student international travel insurance through ISIC for year-long coverage at a cost of \$50. This policy does not replace Creighton's student insurance; it supplements and covers critical needs you might have when away from campus. Checks can be made to Creighton University and dropped off in the GEO office. Alternately, students may pay by credit card in the Global Engagement Office. Once the student is enrolled, an e-mail confirmation will be sent, which provides information on uploading your personal profile. The card will be sent to the Global Engagement Office (GEO) and you will receive an e-mail when you may come and pick it up. It is important to do this at least a month before leaving the country. The ISIC card can often times be used as an alternate form of identification while in the Dominican Republic and will be necessary for any hospital visits that may be made.

Phone & Communication Options

A simple way to call the US is through Skype, so it is best to create an account before your semester and purchase a plan to call cell phones or landlines from Skype's website.

The Encuentro Dominicano program provides each student with a mobile phone for local use while in the DR. The phone will have a local DR number and can be used for communication with local Encuentro staff and friends while in-country. The phone is provided to the student free of charge, but **it is the responsibility of the student to load the phone with minutes via prepaid card**. The cost varies depending on how much the student uses his/her mobile phone, but the average cost is \$10USD/month. Prepaid phone cards from the US do not work in the DR. **It is required that students bring this phone whenever leaving the ILAC campus for safety and security reasons.**

Many students choose to bring his/her smartphone to the DR and only use WiFi capabilities on the phone when at ILAC and other locations with WiFi. You may look in to pre-purchasing an international cellular/data plan before departing the US, but these plans are generally expensive (options vary by phone carrier). Another option is to purchase a local SIM card for your smartphone while in the DR, but you must first make sure your phone is unlocked and SIM card-capable before leaving the US. Should you wish to purchase a SIM card for use in the DR the student life director can advise you.

Whatsapp - It is strongly recommended to download this free WiFi messaging app for contact with local Dominicans and friends/family back home. Whatsapp is widely used in Latin America, but requires an SMS confirmation for download. Therefore, this **MUST** be downloaded and activated before leaving the US.

Preparing Yourself for the Program – Weeks Before Departure:

Budget

Cash: Do not exchange U.S. money for Dominican pesos before you leave. There is a money-exchange house near the ILAC center, which changes money once you arrive. It is unadvised to change large sums of money before your departure.

Credit/Debit Cards: Take a major credit or debit card (or both). VISA is one of the most widely accepted credit cards worldwide. Make sure to keep a list of your credit card numbers and the toll-free assistance numbers separate from the card(s). You should also give this list to a family member in the U.S. Also, before leaving the country, students should have a conversation with their parents or a reliable person who would be willing to help him or her out by transferring money if a credit card is lost. See more information about this topic in “Financial Issues in the D.R.” (Page 25).

You should notify your credit card company that you will be traveling, so that they can expect international charges. Check with your particular bank for international withdrawal fees, and also to see if there is an affiliate bank here in the Dominican Republic that won’t charge for withdrawals. Some students take a second credit card (kept in a separate location from the primary card) to use in cases of emergency.

ATM Machines: You are able to use ATMs in the Dominican Republic. There are many ATM machines around Santiago. This is generally the most convenient way to access your money.

Traveler’s checks: Do NOT bring travelers checks.

Planning your Budget: Your housing, most meals and program transportation costs are included in the program cost. You will want to plan for additional spending money while in the Dominican Republic. You should consider making plans for emergencies and consider other discretionary spending you might need when planning your individual budget. Talk to students you know have gone in the past for a better sense of how much you may spend.

| Mandatory Costs | Cost Range | Average Cost |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Orientation Dinner | \$13 - \$25 | \$19 |
| Guagua Rides (Orientation) | \$5 | \$5 |
| Sosua Day Trip | Varied Costs | \$16 |
| Lunch in Santo Domingo | \$5 - \$13 | \$8 |
| Dinner in Santo Domingo | \$13 - \$25 | \$19 |
| Reorientation Dinner | \$13 - \$25 | \$19 |
| Final Service Site Trip | \$1.25 - \$2.50 | \$2 |
| Average Total Cost: \$88 | | |

Medical Costs: Students are responsible for all of their own medical costs. Most costs are covered by ISIC, but must first be paid out of pocket. Although medical care is considerably cheaper here, it can seem expensive if you don't budget for it. Expect to pay \$25 - \$50 for each medical visit, plus the cost of prescriptions.

Average medical cost: \$40

****Emergency Funds:** It is important to be able to access emergency funds in the event that you need to seek medical attention. Think about bringing an extra credit card so that you can access money in the case of an emergency.

Other Expenses

| Transportation to Service Sites | Pesos/day | Pesos Total | USD Total |
|--|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Accion Callejera | 50 | 1000 | \$25 |
| Caritas Cien Fuegos | 90 | 1800 | \$46 |
| Caritas Licey | 50 | 1000 | \$25 |
| CONANI | 50 | 1000 | \$25 |
| Hospicio | 50 | 1000 | \$25 |
| Escuela Pontezuela | 90 | 1800 | \$46 |

Average Total Cost: \$34

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|---------------|----------|
| Tourist Visa | \$10 USD |
| Departure Tax | \$98 USD |

Total Cost: \$108

Non-Student Life Excursions

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|----------------------------------|---|
| Climbing Pico Duarte | \$150 - \$320 (depends on # of days and mules) |
| 27 waterfalls | \$15 + transportations + food, drinks, etc. |
| Trip to the beach | \$15 for transportation + other expenses (food, hostel, drinks, etc.) |
| Average total Cost: \$350 | |

Going Out

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| Restaurants | \$15 - \$25 each time you eat out |
| Drinks | Varies greatly depending on what you drink (\$2.50 - \$9 per drink) |
| Snacks | Street food is usually \$.50 – \$2.00 |
| Average total Cost: \$320 | |

Laundry

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|---------------------------------|------|
| Laundry Detergent | \$20 |
| Machine and Dryers | Free |
| Average Total Cost: \$20 | |

Phone Cards for local cellphone

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|---------------------------------|--|
| For normal use | \$40 (for the entire semester - \$10 per/month) |
| Calling friends/family | \$0.25/minute |
| **Whatsapp | It is strongly recommended to download this free messaging app for contact with local Dominicans and friends/family back home. This MUST be downloaded and activated before leaving the US. |
| Average Total Cost: \$40 | |

Transportation (Misc.)

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| Taxis (must use after 7 p.m.) | ~\$10 – \$20 dollars round trip total (usually much less when shared) |
| Guaguas | \$0.65 p/student p/trip |
| Taxi to airport at end of program | ~\$5 - \$7 (taxi cost is the responsibility of the student) |
| Average Total Cost: \$200 | |

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| Semester Average: \$1,200 |
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Other Costs to Consider

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|---------------------------------|---|
| Souvenirs | Fall/Spring Break Trips |
| Trips to other cities/beaches | Special Groceries (if you choose)/Shampoo/Soap/etc. |
| Supplies for Service (optional) | Visits back to Campos |
| Skype Credit | Family/Friend Visits |

Packing:

Encuentro students have compiled a comprehensive suggested packing list based on their experience of what was helpful to have and what they felt to be superfluous. We think that this list takes everything into consideration, but please remember that they are just recommendations. If you would like to live more in solidarity with your Dominican host community, feel free to leave the comfort objects behind and/or bring smaller quantities than recommended. PLEASE SEE "RECOMMENDED DRESS" ON PAGE 15.

Encuentro Dominicano Packing List**Clothes and Shoes:****For ILAC & service sites:**

- Jeans/pants for daily wear 3
- Shorts (**knee length** or longer) and/or capris 2-3
- T-shirts 6-8
- Blouses, shirts, collared shirts (appropriate for church) 3
- Pants or dresses (or other appropriate church attire) 1-2
- Tennis shoes 1 pair
- Sandals (with straps are recommended- Chacos/Texas/Keens) 1 pair
- Tank tops (to work out/sleeping/at ILAC-NOT spaghetti straps) 3-4

For campo immersions:

- Lightweight Climbing/rugged boots (also used for hiking trips) 1 pair
- Sandals (with straps are recommended- Chacos/Texas/Keens) 1 pair
- Flip-flops (1 pair that can be used for showering) 1-2 pairs
- Long skirts (at or below the knee) or nice pants for church in campo 1-2
- Work pants/jeans 2-3
- Work t-shirts 3-5
- Work shoes (old athletic shoes) 1 pair
- Pair of work gloves 1
- Safety goggles/glasses 1

For nightlife in Santiago:

- Nice shoes (for dancing/going out, wedges OK for women) 1-2 pairs
- Dress shirts (for dancing/going out) 4
- Dresses (for dancing/going out) 2-3

Etc.

- Sweat pants 1
- Sweatshirt and Sweater 1-2
- Long sleeve shirt 1
- Socks (long and short) and underwear 10 - 12
- Pajamas/Sleepwear 1
- Mesh shorts 1-2
- Swimsuit (and a sarong/beach cover-up) 1-2
- Cross-body purse for daily use in Santiago 1

Required Packing Items:

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|--|------------------------------|
| Passport | 1 |
| License (or other form of identification) | 1 |
| International Student Insurance Card | 1 |
| Flashlight/headlamp | 1 |
| Water bottle | 1-2 *30-40 oz. recommended |
| Bathroom supplies | 1 *May be purchases in DR |
| Journal | 1 |
| Feminine Hygiene Products | *May also be purchased in DR |
| Alarm Clock (battery operated) | 1 |
| Backpack or duffle bag (for weekend trips) | 1 |
| Flash drives to save work | 1 |
| Prescription Medicines | 4 month supply |
| Basic 1 st Aid Kit (band-aids, Neosporin, painkillers, etc) | 1 |
| Water shoes | 1 |
| Baseball hat | 1 |
| Credit/Debit card (recommended for emergencies) | 1 |
| Thermometer | 1 |
| Instant Hand Sanitizer | 1 |
| Repellent (with 30+% DEET) | 3-4 |

Optional Packing Items – Some can be purchased in the DR, but may be expensive

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|---|----------------------------------|
| Headset for SKYPE use | 1 |
| Sunglasses | 1 |
| Waterproof jacket or poncho and/or umbrella | 1 |
| Watch | 1 |
| Sunblock (SPF 30 or stronger) | 1 |
| Dramamine | 1 |
| Mesh Laundry Bag | 1 |
| Camera | 1 |
| Granola bars/snacks | 1-2 boxes |
| Towel | 1 Available for free use at ILAC |
| Planner/Agenda | 1 |
| Spanish-English Dictionary | 1 |
| Batteries | 2-3 packs |
| Laptop | Highly Recommended |
| Water shoes (or Chacos/Tevas/Keens) | Highly Recommended |
| Baseball hat or other sun hat | 1 |
| Laundry bag | 1 |

It is recommended to bring more long pants rather than capris or skirts. In the past, students have regretted wearing capris pants and skirts because of the mosquitoes. Light colors and light materials are best since the sun is intense in the D.R. and dark colored clothes attract mosquitoes. Coordinate colors so you can wear anything with anything, which will give you more choices for outfits. Clothes that wrinkle easily are not recommended. **You can purchase laundry detergent in the DR.**

***Many of the packing items can be purchased at local stores, but can be expensive if you are looking for US brands.**

Suggestions for Host Families:

Photos and postcards are the recommended gift for host families. You can develop pictures in the DR.

Luggage

Most airlines will allow you one free checked bag for international flights. You are allowed one carry-on bag and one carry on personal item for free. For example, one airline charges \$40 for an additional checked bag, and \$90 for an overweight bag. Keep this in mind while packing!

It is not uncommon for checked luggage to arrive a few days late. Therefore, it is recommended to carry-on any essential items that you may need to last you until your luggage arrives (for example, medicine, contact lenses and glasses, etc), as well as a spare change of clothes.

Mark all luggage - inside and out - with your name and address. If you have an itinerary, put a copy inside each bag. Keep a list of what is in each bag and carry the list with your other documents. Check for specific luggage dimension information on your airline's website.

Checked Luggage: Mark your bags in some distinctive way so they are easy to spot among a pile of other bags. You might use a fluorescent tag, a colorful bow, a bright piece of tape on the side. Always count your bags to make sure you have them all with you.

Carry-On Luggage: You are allowed one carry-on suitcase and one personal item such as a purse or book bag. See your airline's carry-on baggage allowance information as carry-on luggage must fit under the seat or in an overhead bin on the aircraft for international flights. Carry some emergency clothing - one change of clothes - in your carry-on, in case your checked luggage does not arrive at the same time you do.

Organize your bags well in advance and remember to pack lightly. Remember to leave space because you will want to return home with souvenirs.

Passport and Documents

Traveling with your Passport: *Never pack your passport in your checked luggage.* While traveling, keep your passport with you at all times. Once you have arrived your passport will be stored in a safe at the ILAC Center in Santiago. Be sure to carry a copy of your passport with you at all times while traveling around the Dominican Republic.

Students do not need a Student Visa to participate in the Encuentro Dominicano program in the Dominican Republic. Students will purchase a \$10 tourist card upon arrival in Santiago's airport.

Take extra copies of all documents with you in case you lose any of them and have to replace them. For the same reason, make at least two photocopies of all your documents - passport, student identification card, driver's license, student insurance card and policy, etc. Carry one set of copies in a place separate from the documents themselves, and leave another set of copies at home with your family. You may also want to consider taking along a certified copy of your birth certificate.

Preparing Yourself for the Program – The Day of Departure:

Safety

There are many things you can do to ensure your safety and that of your belongings. Start by following these guidelines:

- Do not carry money and important documents all in one place.
- Never pack essential documents, valuables or medicine (anything you could not do without) in your checked luggage. Put them in your carry-on bag.
- Take only the credit/debit cards you will use.
- Keep a separate list of cards, numbers, and emergency replacement procedures for credit cards, passports and visas, calling cards, identification and insurance cards. Be sure someone at home has a copy as well.

Airport security is tougher than ever. Therefore, allow extra time for extra security measures, which may include identifying your checked luggage at one or more points beyond check-in. For international flights, arrive at least two hours prior to departure.

Do not make jokes about terrorism or hijacking. A comment about a hidden gun or knife can get you arrested, charged with a felony or fined. Knives, scissors, or anything resembling a weapon should be placed in your checked luggage.

Gift-wrapped packages are subject to search, and you may have to open them. Wait to wrap the gifts when you get to your destination, or deliver them unwrapped.

Do not argue with security personnel, as uncooperative behavior will lead to delays and intensive searches. The security personnel are there for your protection.

For your own safety while traveling:

- Do not watch other people's luggage in the airport, or leave your bags or articles unattended.
- Do not check bags for anyone else or carry gifts/packages for anyone you do not know very well
- Get in and out of airports and buses as promptly as possible.
- Avoid suspicious, abandoned packages in the airport and elsewhere and report them to security personnel.
- Watch for suspicious behavior and do not be shy about reporting it.
- Do not call undue attention to yourself as a U.S. traveler (clothing, etc.).

Customs and Immigration

Traveling to the DR requires paying **\$10 US in cash** for a visitor's visa before you go through customs.

Take a left after going down the elevator. Airport attendants will guide you to where you need to make this payment. Because of your extended stay as a student, there is an exit fee of \$98 US cash or RD\$4000 (Dominican pesos) that you will pay upon leaving the D.R.

Getting Your Luggage

After proceeding through customs, you will pick up your luggage from the baggage claim. It will then be x-rayed. Have your baggage claim tickets handy in case airport attendants ask to see them.

Should your luggage not be there, go to the baggage claim service desk. Do NOT leave the airport without first providing ILAC's phone number and address so that American Airlines can deliver your luggage directly to ILAC once they do arrive, usually within the next few days.

ILAC

Carretera Duarte Km. 7½

Licey al Medio, Santiago

Dominican Republic

Phone: 809-736-0095

Arriving at ILAC

The Academic Director and Student Life Director will be waiting for you at the airport. As a group, you will board an ILAC bus and be transported to the ILAC center.

It is very likely that the first thing you will want to do is to contact your family and let them know that you have arrived safely. You will be able to call home after arrival at the ILAC center through Skype or the Directors' phones.

What to Expect: Getting to Know Encuentro Dominicano

Rules and Regulations

Curfew

ILAC curfew is **1 a.m.** every night. This means that students should be in the front gate at ILAC by 1 a.m. Students will accept the consequences for breaking curfew, which will be a topic covered in orientation. This curfew is set for student safety and protection and is within good reason. *This curfew is subject to change as the Student Life Director sees necessary.*

Leaving the ILAC Center

Students are encouraged to leave the ILAC Center and explore Santiago and the Dominican Republic during their free time. As a general safety precaution, students are not permitted to leave ILAC's immediate surroundings (as defined by the Student Life Director) by themselves. Students must leave with at least one other student, and must always carry a cell phone to call or be called in case of an emergency.

Whereabouts

When not at the ILAC Center, students must report whereabouts to the Student Life Director.

Alcohol

The consumption of alcohol is NOT allowed at the ILAC Center or in the *campos* at any time. No exceptions.

The legal drinking age in the Dominican Republic is 18 years of age. However, drinking alcohol is the choice and responsibility of the student, and students will accept the consequences for inappropriate behavior. Students should be aware that most alcoholic beverages have a higher alcohol content than those in the U.S., especially beer.

Students are bound to see open alcohol usage on the streets of Santiago and in the *campos* as it is part of the cultural norm. However, culturally alcohol usage is treated differently in the D.R. than in the U.S. For example, most Dominicans do not drink "just to get drunk." While drinking alcohol is socially acceptable, getting drunk is not. Students should not be walking the streets drinking beer, especially near the ILAC center, as it can be disrespectful to local Dominicans. Students should also not bar hop on foot, as it is very unsafe. Once it gets dark in Santiago, students need to use taxis.

Individuals and groups of intoxicated US citizens are prime targets for thieves. Always be cautious of your surroundings, especially if you have chosen to drink alcohol.

Illegal Drugs

The possession or use of illegal drugs is not accepted in the Encuentro Dominicano program and is grounds for being dismissed from the program. The penalty for illegal drug possession is considered a "criminal offense" with immediate and prolonged jail time, without due process or bail. Students need to understand the seriousness of breaking Dominican laws, as the Dominican

legal system is not going to care if you are a Creighton student and you will have to abide by their legal process.

Personal Relationships/Sexual Activity

Intercultural experiences are a cornerstone of the Encuentro Dominicano program and respectful friendships are encouraged with Dominicans at the ILAC Center, in the *campos* and in other parts of life in the D.R. “Respectful friendship” *does not include romantic, intimate physical behavior of any kind, including sexual activity and kissing.* Sexual activity in the Dominican Republic involves great personal risk including scandal, sexually transmitted diseases, and the potential for sexual assault. Relationships that can disrupt the functioning of the Encuentro program or jeopardize the relationships which Encuentro has built among the Dominican people will be seen as a violation of the Creighton Code of Conduct and be responded to appropriately.

As the University’s Code of Conduct states, “Any sexual activity which is not in accordance with the Judeo-Christian values of Creighton University and the specific doctrinal teachings of the Roman Catholic Church are prohibited on University property or in the course of activities sponsored by the University or its organizations.” Therefore, engaging in sexual activity may result in your being sent back to the US, which includes withdrawing from all Encuentro courses and paying for all remaining airline and University fees.

Please also note, Dominican law does not protect students from sexual assault in the same way that laws in the United States may. If a student chooses to initiate a sexual encounter or consensually agree to one, they have little or no protection in the Dominican law should they choose to withdraw their consent.

Students are advised that it is NOT safe to go off alone with a Dominican of the opposite sex, and that seeking out a place to be alone with a Dominican might be misunderstood in the cultural context as meaning something different than originally intended. Private conversations can take place privately, but should be held in open places where other people are nearby. Sexual abstinence is the only guaranteed method of preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. Abstinence or a sexually monogamous relationship between HIV-negative partners is the only way to avoid HIV/AIDS.

ILAC Center Rules

While participating in the Encuentro Dominicano program, students are guests at the ILAC Center. Therefore students are required to follow any and all rules that ILAC should set forth. Students will be informed of ILAC Center rules by the Student Life Director during orientation.

Recommended Dress

Students will become familiar with the dress that is typical and respectful of Dominican society. Dressing similarly to a Dominican does not necessarily mean that you are dressing appropriately. The Student Life Director will provide more information in orientation in the D.R. about proper dress and specific dress guidelines. For example, wearing tank tops, sleeveless sundresses, and shorts are not permitted on campo immersion or at ILAC during the 8 a.m.-5 p.m. work day; however, you are permitted to wear them to the beach. Below is a brief description of some guidelines that students are expected to follow.

At the ILAC CENTER: shorts and skirts must be at least knee-length. Remember that the center is a work place for many Dominicans during the day. Therefore, it is important that we respect their work environment. One way we can do this is by being properly dressed. Running or exercising shorts should be worn **exclusively** for exercising, never in the buildings. Runners should always wear tops - jogging bras are not acceptable. Sleeveless tops are okay, but shorts, spaghetti straps, or very thin strap tank tops are not appropriate dress at ILAC, especially Monday-Friday, 8-5 p.m. If you must wear short-shorts or a spaghetti strap top, this is only appropriate in the Encuentro student dorms.

In the City: Females can wear long walking shorts, though pants and long skirts may be preferable. Likewise, men are encouraged to wear pants. Be sensitive and respectful of the cultural norms and customs. Generally, people should look well dressed in whatever they happen to be wearing. Sloppy dress is not in style here and locals are often dressed up every day. Shorts should always be of the long, knee-length style, unless you are at the beach.

At Service Sites: Appropriate dress can vary from site to site, however, as a general rule students should look well-put-together when going to their service sites. Shorts and sleeveless tops are not appropriate for service sites. Culturally, respect is shown through clothing and physical appearance. Therefore, wearing extremely casual clothing to service sites could be seen as a lack of respect. Items like work-out or pajama type pants, flip-flops or any dirty or stained clothing are not appropriate for service sites. Some sites also discourage facial piercings.

In the Campo: Daily dress for males and females includes pants and a shirt. Work clothes are jeans/pants, t-shirts and tennis shoes. Tank tops, sleeveless tops, and shorts should not be brought to the campo. It is also advised to bring a long sleeved shirt or lightweight jacket. Females may wear a long skirt/dress to church. More information will be given to students during campo orientation.

What to Expect: Service Learning

Encuentro Dominicano Service Sites

Students will become familiar with all of the service sites before a decision is made as to their service site for the entire semester. Although most descriptions below include directions, ALL service sites will be visited as a group during orientation. Students will learn how to get to their service site and quickly become comfortable with traveling. University policy stands that students are responsible for all transportation costs to and from their service site. Costs vary among the different sites and students will be made aware of the costs during orientation in the D.R. Although Creighton cannot provide transportation funds to students, students are advised to speak with the Academic Director about concerns regarding costs should it be a major influence in deciding upon a service site. In the directions, the commonly used term, guagua, refers to either a bus or a van. Students MUST always be seated within the guagua and not hanging off the side.

Hospicio San Vicente de Paul

Description: Hospicio is one of the few elderly “hospice” care facilities in the Santiago area. Hospicio is a community for 70 elderly individuals. USAID has reported that Hospicio is considered a location where the need for food is “great”. USAID has contributed to this problem through donations of international donations of food to supplement the meals provided at Hospicio. Many of the individuals at Hospicio lack friendships and relationships with others.

Expectations: Students who utilize this option for their service work will spend a great deal of time interacting with the members of the community. Therefore, a decent command of Spanish is expected for students choosing this service site placement. Students will also be expected to assist with meal preparation for the elderly. You may choose to participate in the daily and weekly religious ceremonies held at Hospicio.

Caritas

Description: Run by a small order of nuns, *Caritas* is essentially a feeding program for poor children in the Santiago area. There are more than 30 feeding centers throughout the city, but the one in Licey is closest. Children who cannot eat enough at home do not function at school, so *Caritas* feeds between 30-60 children daily so they may attend school with a full stomach. Students arrive mid-morning and assist with reading to children, playing, serving food, and helping to clean up. Currently, students work at *Caritas* centers in Licey and in Cien Fuegos.

Expectations: Decent Spanish is necessary to truly interact in this service site, it will also allow one a glimpse into poor families and the food challenges they face. You will need patience to manage the chaos of 30-60 children during a normal visit.

Angeles de CONANI (Hogar Luby)

Description: Hogar Luby was founded in 1991 as a home for disabled children and adults. It was privately owned and managed and used cages until the mid-1990's when cribs were introduced. On February 11th, 2005 it was taken over by CONANI, a governmental organization that works specifically with children (ages infant-18) in the Dominican Republic. There has been much speculation about exploitation and scandal under the initial ownership and management. Since the time that CONANI took over, the home has seen many changes. These changes include better general treatment of residents, cleaner living conditions, more organization and higher payment for employees. Recently, the

government has donated the lower level of the original building. The extra physical space is great for the residents and provides the children with the opportunity to be outside. Under the old management, families had to pay for their loved ones to live in the home. Now, under government control, the services are free. There are 14 paid employees. There are 3 who work a rotating night shift so that there are always 2 people (one nurse and one childcare professional) with the children throughout the night. In addition, there is a physician who comes to check on the residents Monday thru Friday, and is on call on the weekends for emergencies.

Expectations: Walking into Hogar Luby can be a difficult experience. Others find walking into Angeles de CONANI a joyful place, where extremely disabled children as well as fairly functional children are cared for. CONANI is seriously under-funded and while the staff will keep a child alive, there is very little physical therapy, psychological and speech therapy, and other typical first world opportunities for growth and development.

Acción Callejera

Description: Acción Callejera is an organization that works with street children in Santiago. Many of the children at the center have dropped out of school to make a living on the streets, shining shoes or washing car windows. They are a very vulnerable population whose rights are often neglected. Acción Callejera provides a variety of services to the children—counseling, homework help, meals, showers and recreation. They also work heavily in prevention, since it is much harder to rehabilitate children accustomed to the rough life on the streets than it is to prevent children from leaving their homes and schools in the first place.

Expectations: Volunteers are expected to help the children in the areas where it is most needed, whether it be homework help or recreation. There are also possibilities of creating and implementing new programs with the approval of the director of the organization. This service site requires a decent command of Spanish.

Centro Educativo Cristiano de Pontezuela

Description: This is a new service site to Encuentro Dominicano this semester. It is a makeshift school for Haitian children ran by a Christian church in its facility. Since children of Haitian descent generally have challenges accessing Dominican schools due to language barriers and because they lack birth certificates that are required to attend school, this church has decided to open its door during the school days to provide basic instruction in French and Creole to these children. There are approximately 115 students ages 3-15 in the school. *Expectations:* Primarily, volunteers will be teaching English. You will need patience and openness to work in a chaotic environment, across cultural and language barriers.

**Note: Due to different sizes of Encuentro communities, sites may not be offered all semesters.*



Supplemental Info

Historical overview

The Dominican Republic

Students will learn the sociological, economic and political history of the country during the semester through their class work, experiential learning and extra-curricular activities. However, they are encouraged to familiarize themselves with those themes prior to the start of the program by referencing the web addresses provided on the Blueline site as well as the reading list in the Resource section of this guide.

Introduction to the City of Santiago

Students in the Encuentro Dominicano program will find that Santiago is an excellent place to live and study while in the Dominican Republic. Santiago is the second largest city in the country. Formally referred to as Santiago de Los Caballeros, Santiago maintains a population of more than 800,000 inhabitants. Students should expect Santiago to offer a variety of the amenities and services they would expect from any urban area comparable in size. In addition to cultural, recreational and sporting activities, students will find restaurants, theatres, museums, libraries, parks, shopping districts and markets, and a host of other activities to spend free time in the city.

Santiago also offers a wide variety of cultural events, which will help introduce students to the cultural background and traditions of Dominican Society. The Gran Teatro del Cibao near the famous “Monumento de los Heroes” and the Centro de Cultura, located in the Parque Central, hosts a variety of cultural events including classical and folk concerts, classical ballet and folk dance, theatrical productions and art exhibits of local Dominican artists.

One may also want to increase their understanding of what makes Santiago so unique. The Tobacco Museum is dedicated to that which brought Santiago and the Cibao Valley much of its fame – tobacco. A favorite pastime for Dominicans is “hanging out” near the “Monumento de los Heroes” and at the restaurants surrounding the site. The Heroes Monument has become a popular nightspot among the younger crowd in Santiago. There are plenty of park benches and grassy areas to relax as well as a charming view of the city providing a good locale to spend a tranquil afternoon or a lively evening. Santiago’s “Calle del Sol” is the principal and busiest street in Santiago. You can find whatever you need in one of the many shops along Calle del Sol as you make your way through sidewalks full with street vendors of all sorts.

For the sports enthusiast, on the weekends, one may want to take in the traditional cockfight, attend a baseball game at the Estadio Cibao or go for a run at the campus of the country’s well-known university, Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM).

Cock fighting is the traditional sport in the Dominican Republic. Every Saturday or Sunday, in the largest cities and the smallest *campos*, cockfights are held in the local “*gallero*.” Though one with a weak stomach may not want to attend, the fury of activity – betting, cheering, roosters being taunted by spectators, roosters taunting each other – is something that some people may want to experience during their time here.

Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC)

Encuentro Dominican students will be representing Creighton University as well as ILAC during the semester since they will be living at the ILAC center and be participating in service that is tied to the ILAC mission. ILAC has a unique history and well-respected presence in Santiago and surrounding rural communities. It is important for students to have read the information below about ILAC’s background and development so that they understand what they will be representing when becoming part of ILAC.

ILAC History and Philosophy

The Beginnings: 1972-1976

The Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC) began at Regis College, Toronto in 1972. Originally, the program was intended for North American priests, seminarians, members of religious communities and theology students to experience and understand the people and problems of a developing nation. Its success each year has depended not only on the dedication of many hardworking individuals, but on the willingness to evolve, to respond to new challenges and openly search for the best ways to let Creighton's students grow in an awareness of God's presence among the materially poor and of each individual's link with them.

The original experience involved fewer people and a less heterogeneous group than today's ILAC. From 1972 to 1976, most participants were Jesuit seminarians, as well as various priests and religious women, all seeking an experience of "conscientization" or heightened sensitivity to world reality and the individual's responsibility to this reality. Several Cuban Jesuits recognized the opportunity to introduce North Americans to a developing nation in a way that would help them reflect on their role as members of a global community, and view the connection between North American affluence and developing national poverty. The initial program then focused on the immersion into daily Dominican life. The first participants had no special skills whatsoever and most had little Spanish background. They spent time together learning Spanish and reflecting on the experience with their adopted families. Most lived with materially poor urban families or families who lived not far outside Santiago.

A New Level of Commitment: 1976-1984

Fr. Ernesto Travieso, SJ, moved to Creighton University in 1975 when he became Chaplain to the medical school, and ILAC moved with him. The first and most natural evolution of ILAC was to take advantage of the resources of the University. At first, the experience was opened to undergraduates who sought the same kind of experience as former participants. These students raised their airfare and spent two months in the summer learning Spanish and living with families in the city and its neighboring *campos*. Soon, ILAC's identity was again evolving. The relationship between Creighton and the people of the Dominican Republic demanded more than the annual hospitality and generosity of the Dominicans. Justice required some response to the new awareness that developed as a result of previous encounters. The relationship had taken on a permanent character and with permanence came a sense

of responsibility. Quite naturally, Fr. Travieso turned again to the resources of Creighton, namely the health science students and professionals with whom he had developed a close relationship. This evolution, however, was not simple and clear. The very character of ILAC had to change in order to accommodate the new level of involvement. Instead of being merely an opportunity to challenge North American awareness of a developing nation, ILAC was now attempting to address directly developing nation problems. The danger of over-involvement was all too obvious; Creighton had no means to substantially affect the quality of health in the Dominican Republic. Lest the program seek to make a dry spot in an ocean, the focus settled on the opportunity to bring, with dignity and personal concern, a modicum of health care to the *campesinos*--for whom few others had shown such concern. As the 1978 participants expressed it: "Our health care teams certainly relieved much immediate pain and suffering, but it would be foolish to think we have changed the general health conditions of the country. That was not our goal." Instead, "We have done the best with what we have and have developed ourselves as persons." The deeper awareness of self and others--conscientization--grew out of the frustrations and limitations of trying to deliver health care on a personal, intimate level, using the terms of *campesinos* themselves rather than those of the North American system. The intent was to enhance the quality of life for as many people as possible through basic care. It took little to improve the lives of many, for at least a short while.

To provide adequate and responsible health care and student supervision, the program accepted health care professionals, especially instructors, from Creighton's faculties. The professionals took on a distinct identity in the program since they only participated in the Dominican Republic for part of the time and only to fulfill an explicit support role. Nevertheless, the encounter with the people and the clinics gave these professionals much of the experience shared by the students. Former student participants often returned as team coordinators or professionals to share again in the experience.

A Vision for the Future: 1985-Present

By 1982, concrete, long-term plans were being developed for both a permanent health care facility in the Dominican Republic, and a year-round health care center in addition to the summer program. "Health Promoters" or "*Cooperadores de Salud*" were selected by their own communities to receive six weeks of ongoing health care training at the ILAC Center, and returned to serve as resource people in their home communities. These Health Promoters also worked with team members in presenting educational topics based on the input of community members.

ILAC has grown dramatically over the past years and remains strong. The reality of poverty, even one's own personal poverty and limitation, is not lost on most participants, and the experience seems to have retained much of the character it possessed from its beginning. The health care involvement of ILAC has served as a positive means to further involvement with the people of the *campos*. Providing health care allows for moments of intense interaction with Dominicans and North Americans that forge friendships and challenge awareness. Many more people have had the opportunity to participate in ILAC because of its health care aspect. A real service has been provided and a relationship between the Creighton community and the Dominican people has been rich--giving way to a real sense of commitment. It remains clear that ILAC, having committed itself to health care in the Dominican Republic, must continue finding ways to develop its care in a compassionate, responsible way, enhancing the dignity and freedom of the people of the Dominican Republic. The latest change in the ILAC program responds to this need by dividing the program and emphasizing a variety of enterprises under the umbrella of *Centro de Educacion para la Salud Integral* (CESI). The presence of a large facility devoted to ILAC in the

Dominican Republic allows for many new program possibilities. It also allows the freedom to restructure the existing program to fit ILAC's dual purpose: to provide students and health professionals the opportunity for conscientization and provide health care education and service to people in remote areas of the Dominican Republic.

The ILAC Center in the Dominican Republic (*Centro de Educacion para la Salud Integral*), provides space for a sophisticated program of *campesino* education, the "Health Promoters" Program, and the opportunity for a year-round program of students (i.e., Encuentro Dominicano) and professionals (i.e., VIDAS, Volunteers for Action and Service) to travel periodically to permanent clinic sites and maintain long-term health care. The Center also provides training in cooking and nutrition, agriculture and small business opportunities, an undergraduate campus for students from Creighton University, and many other programs.

In January 1992, the College of Arts and Sciences and ILAC began a Semester Abroad Program, allowing students an experience of immersion through living and studying at the Center during the Spring semester. The College of Business Administration also began a Semester Abroad Program in the Fall 1994 semester. The Semester Abroad Program in the Dominican Republic was transitioned to the International Programs Office at Creighton University during the Fall of 2001. The ILAC office and International Programs work together to further enhance the students' academic experience while maintaining the ILAC mission. In 2005, the Semester Abroad Program evolved into the Encuentro Dominicano Program, open to students from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, and Nursing. Since 2005, more than 85 undergraduate students have participated in the Encuentro program including students from Saint Louis University and Regis University in Denver.

ILAC, in conjunction with the Department of Occupational Therapy Program, began providing students and professionals the opportunity to address therapy needs in the city of Santiago in the summer of 1993. In 1994, two VIDAS teams of physicians began staffing ILAC's permanent campo clinics for one year of volunteer service. In January, 1996, ILAC provided the first Service Retreat in the Dominican Republic for Creighton faculty and staff. In April, 1996, over 15 Physical Therapy students and professionals began offering PT services to Santiago sites with little or no access to this type of care. The Law School at Creighton University sponsors a retreat each spring, which began as a pilot program in 2002.

At any one time, projects such as health care, community development, semester abroad programs, and high school and other university service-learning programs may be active at the Center. The original conscientization experience may be promoted through retreats or extended stays, much like the original ILAC Program. ILAC will continue to strive to structure programs within the context of a caring encounter challenging the awareness and concern of all involved.

Program Inspiration

Since the 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus (1975), the Society has focused its mission on "the service of faith and the promotion of justice" (Kolvenbach, Santa Clara address, sec. 1). In a talk given at Santa Clara University in 2000, the Superior General of the Jesuits, Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., proposed that these two deliberately open phrases may be interpreted as meaning respectively, "the service of faith . . . [by bringing] the counter-cultural gift of Christ to the world," and the "justice of the

Gospel which embodies God's love and saving mercy" (Santa Clara address, secs. IA & IB). Kolvenbach in his interpretation of this widely used phrase emphasizes Ignatius' desire to combine words with deeds. Social action in the name of the justice of the Gospel must be combined, he proposes, with much analysis and reflection (Santa Clara address, sec. IB). In 2003, Kolvenbach added the gloss that the promotion of justice needs to combine academic rigor with social activism (Ignatian Charism, pars. 19-22).

In applying these principles to contemporary higher education in Jesuit universities, Kolvenbach proposes that students be educated in "solidarity for the real world," and "solidarity is learned through contact rather than through concepts [only]" (Santa Clara address, sec. IIIA). "When the heart is touched by direct experience, the mind may be challenged to change. Personal involvement with innocent suffering, with the injustice others suffer, is the catalyst for solidarity which then gives rise to intellectual inquiry and moral reflection" (Santa Clara address, sec. IIIA). Kolvenbach adds that "students, in the course of their formation, must let the gritty reality of the world into their lives, so they can learn to feel it, think about it critically, respond to its suffering and engage it constructively" (Santa Clara address, sec. IIIA). Finally, he proposes that "insertion programs," "off-campus contacts" and "hands-on courses" at Jesuit universities should not be "too optional and peripheral, but at the core of every Jesuit university's program of studies" (Santa Clara address, sec. IIIA).

One of the factors deeply affecting the Dominican economy and Dominican lives is globalization. Kolvenbach observes that "Ignatius would have been fascinated by the phenomenon of globalization" (Ignatian Charism, par. 29). Universities, he notes, have "an indispensable role in the critical analysis of globalization, with its positive and negative connotations . . . It is a matter of an authentic process of discernment, in order to discover what is coming from the good spirit and what is coming from the bad" (Ignatian Charism, par. 29). Universities have an obligation to examine the ethical implications of this globalization – on economies, on community, on the gap between the rich and the poor, on human rights, and on the environment (par. 30). And after listing a number of ills exacerbated by globalization, Kolvenbach states that "it is not enough to denounce; it is necessary to also pronounce and propose" (par. 31).

Creighton Code of Conduct

Encuentro Dominicano students will be expected to live consistently with the Creighton Code of Conduct and the CESI Code of Conduct. Further, students will be reminded that all actions while enrolled as a student in the *Encuentro Dominicano* are direct reflections upon the CESI Center, Creighton University, and the United States of America. They are ambassadors of all three realities.

The Creighton University community is based on a Catholic, Jesuit tradition and is committed to supporting the intrinsic value of each human being. This tradition involves striving to create a human community influenced by the laws of justice and love, complete with respect and concern for all persons as children of God. The Creighton University community is dedicated to the promotion of values consistent with personal and academic excellence.

Choosing to join this community, whether as a student, faculty or staff, obligates you to act in a manner that is consistent with these commitments. Joining the Creighton University community evidences your acceptance of these commitments and agreement to strive for their achievement. Commitment to living by these principles means that you will endeavor to:

1. Act with professional, academic, and personal integrity.

Consistent with this principle is conduct in accord with the academic honesty policy of the University, other University policies that foster a human community of justice, respect, and concern, and the code of ethics of your foreseen profession. This principle challenges you to shape a personal code of positive values, to live a healthy, balanced lifestyle, and to discover and embrace the responsibilities of your freedom, intelligence, and intrinsic worth.

Inconsistent with this principle are all forms of dishonesty, excuse-making, failure to take responsibility for your behavior, trust in relationships and violations of the code of ethics of your foreseen profession.

2. Respect and promote the dignity of all persons.

Consistent with this principle is growing in understanding of different cultures and groups, resolving conflicts fairly, appreciating peoples' differences, and seeking truths and values essential to human life and community. This principle challenges you to refrain from actions that threaten or discourage the freedom, personal safety, and respect that all individuals deserve.

Inconsistent with this principle are actions that compromise or demean the intrinsic worth of individuals or groups. All forms of racism, sexism, pornography, lewd behavior, harassment, intimidation, taunting, insult, physical harm, and discrimination are inconsistent with this principle.

3. Respect the policies of the Creighton University community and the rights of its members both on and off campus, as well as the just laws of the civic community and the rights of its members.

Consistent with this principle is the affirmative support for equal rights and opportunities for all members of the Creighton University community, realizing that you are a member of a larger community, understanding societal issues, and being a responsible participant in the civic and Creighton community.

Inconsistent with this principle are actions that are illegal and that violate another's right to move about freely and securely, to live and learn in a community where members are secure in their property and person, to express themselves appropriately, and to enjoy privacy.

4. Support the personal, professional, academic, and vocational development of the members of the Creighton University Community.

Consistent with this principle are actions that are compassionate and considerate of the needs and well-being of others and that encourage the development of our moral, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, personal, and vocational abilities.

Inconsistent with this principle are actions that are insensitive, inhospitable, spiteful, or which unjustly or arbitrarily inhibit another's ability to securely pursue goals in accord with the development of their abilities. All members of the Creighton University community are obligated to promote actions consistent with these principles, and to confront, challenge, and respond to actions that are inconsistent with this code.

Living and Studying in the Dominican Republic

Credit Transfer

All courses offered through Encuentro Dominicano are certified through Creighton University, including independent study courses with Creighton professors. Coursework taken through participation in the Encuentro Dominicano program will factor into your Creighton QPA and will appear on your Creighton academic record.

Financial Issues

If you currently receive federal financial aid, you may continue to receive it while abroad. You may also continue to receive institutional grants since Encuentro Dominicano is a Creighton sponsored program. Pay any outstanding bills you currently have at the Creighton business office prior to your departure. Make arrangements to have all of your Creighton expenses taken care of while you are abroad. It may be a good idea to sign over Power of Attorney to someone in your family who can take care of routine business while you are overseas for an extended period of time.

Working Abroad

Students participating in Encuentro Dominicano are not permitted to work abroad.

Voting & Tax Season

Will you be away from home or in another country when tax season rolls around? You should make arrangements for someone - a family member, perhaps, to complete your income tax return if it's necessary for you to do so. There are financial penalties for failing to complete tax returns.

Will there be a local, state, or national election while you are away from home? If so, and if you are interested in voting by absentee ballot, contact your local election commissioner to obtain information on how to obtain and submit this ballot. Check out <http://www.fvap.gov/>. You should request your absentee ballot before you leave.

Communication

Mail cannot be forwarded internationally. Provide Creighton's mail room with a *U.S. forwarding address* for mail received on campus. Your family's address in the U.S. is probably the best choice - a family member can then forward any important mail to you.

Your Creighton University e-mail account is the official mode of communication on all university matters, including study abroad.

Most cell phones brought from the U.S. to the D.R. do not work unless you have an international plan. Many students that bring their phone will store it in the safe at ILAC, which is recommended. Calling cards bought in the U.S. will NOT work in the D.R. The main way students communicate with family and friends back home is through Skype. Students can purchase plans on Skype or Skype credit that allow for them to call cell phones and landlines in the U.S. from a computer. See the official Skype website for more information. Before students leave the U.S., they may want to orient their parents or friends to Skype if they are not familiar with the program.

Photographs

If possible, take a digital camera. Sharing photos throughout the semester with your family back home is a great way to help them relate to your experience. Remember to be respectful in situations when it may or may not be appropriate to shoot photos. Be careful how you handle your camera in public places as it can quickly turn you into a desirable target for someone looking to take advantage of you. Cameras are also easy to lose or have stolen if you leave them on tables or out of your view. Just be cautious.

Keep a Journal

Keeping a personal journal is one of the best ways to reflect on your experience and also have something to look back on in the future. The retreats are ideal times to journal, but you will also have free time throughout the semester that you can use as writing time. Journals make amazing keepsakes.

Visitors at ILAC

Friends and family are encouraged to visit during and after the semester, with the exception of during campo immersions. Students should make potential visitors aware of the immersion dates so that plans are not made during those times. Once plans are set, visitors should submit a **Lodging Request Form** to ILAC as soon as possible. **This form can be found on the last page of this handbook.**

Co-habitation is not permitted. Therefore, visitors of the opposite sex must make appropriate arrangements when staying at the ILAC center. Visitors are expected to follow ILAC's house rules.

Students and visitors should consult the Visitor's Guidebook provided by the Student Life Director for further information.

Student Life in the Dominican Republic

Accommodations

During your time at the ILAC center, you will stay in single-sex dorm rooms (4-5 people per room). You will be provided with a mosquito net and linens such as bed sheets and a towel. Each room has a bathroom with a shower, closet space, selves and desks, which students will need to share. There is a laundry facility to which students have free access. However, students will need to purchase their own laundry detergent, which can be done in Santiago.

During your campo immersions, you will be staying with volunteer host families and accommodations will be discussed during the immersion orientation in the D.R. Living conditions are rather humble. The host families look forward to having you participate in family activities and are excited to share their lives with you. Since they are opening their home to you, it is important that you be respectful. You will quickly see how special Dominican hospitality can be.

ILAC Facilities

The ILAC Center is located on 4.2 acres of land on the outskirts of the city of Santiago, near "Licey." It consists of eight connected buildings, two outdoor kiosks (one screened) and eleven small guest houses or "casitas" (including the Student Life Director's casita) containing a total of over 25,000 square feet.

Prominently situated on the campus is St. Omer's Chapel and the attached Bell Tower which functions as a chapel of the Parish of Licey (Sagrado Corazon), under the authority of the Archbishop of Santiago. The Chapel can accommodate 200 worshippers.

The Academic building contains five student dorms, a library, the Academic Director's office, a computer room and student lounge.

The Zumpano building houses two classrooms and is used by both International and Dominican Educational Programs, including Encuentro Dominicano.

The Garrido building houses the ILAC Center administrative offices, offices of the Department of Health, Education, and Agriculture, guest rooms, and a commons area.

The Shady building is a covered, but open-air refectory capable of seating 150 individuals. It is primarily used as a dining room and large meeting room. It is located adjacent to the kitchen and service area.

The Service building includes the kitchen supplying the refectory, three large dormitories with a capacity of housing over 100 individuals, the laundry room, and two staff housing areas.

The Workshop and Garage building contain space for ILAC Center vehicles and a maintenance area.

Green Space includes grounds for an extensive garden where vegetables, bananas and plantains are grown and supplied to the center. Also, this area contains a full size basketball/volleyball court and exercise area, and a figure eight running track (3 laps/mile).

The buildings surround a central, paved courtyard with a fountain and flowers. The complex also includes a large auxiliary electrical generator to compensate for the frequent power outages of the public electrical system.

Community Living

Creating and maintaining a learning community is a vital aspect of the Encuentro Dominicano program. Since student residences are located in the ILAC center, the group will have the ability to live and study in a dynamic environment with a support network throughout their experience.

Upon arrival students will be asked to discuss and devise the framework and norms for their community. This unique experience will allow the students the opportunity to create an environment in which their own cultural values will be blended with that of the Dominican Republic. Students will be asked to create the norms by which they will live and challenged to incorporate norms such as a commitment to speak the Spanish language, participating in community reflections, developing community and faith based activities, striving toward the understanding of what it means to live simply, and more.

The ILAC Center will serve as the temporary "home" of the Encuentro Dominicano students for the next several months. However, students must understand that at all times they should consider themselves guests in the center, city, country and culture. The center also is home for various other non-Creighton programs and acts as a retreat and conference center as well. Generally, these groups offer students affiliated with Creighton a chance to get to know a good number of Dominicans from various walks of life. When these other groups are using the center, students should be respectful of the fact that they

are not the only ones using the space at the center. Because the space is used at different times for retreats, conferences, religious activities, community events and a variety of other functions, a great deal of respect is necessary for the space provided by the center and the rules established to maintain the functioning of the space for everyone. Rules established by the center may include times when the center must remain quiet, restrictions on using certain spaces at certain times, meal time regulations, and others.

Students are expected to show courtesy and timeliness with all program sponsored activities. Your ability to be on time and ready for all travel and activities at the center is at times necessary for things to function well. Dominican time is a wonderful cultural difference, but should not be an excuse.

Electricity

Electricity in the D.R. is not consistently reliable. However, it is reliable in the ILAC center because of generators. WiFi is also available in the ILAC center. Electrical outlets are the same in the D.R. as they are in the U.S. so you do not need to purchase a converter.

Using the Phone

To call the US, it is easiest to use Skype, so it is best to create an account before your semester and purchase a plan to call cell phones or landlines from Skype's website. The Encuentro program has several cell phones that students use throughout the semester when outside of the ILAC center. These phones are given minutes through prepaid cards purchased in the D.R.. It is the responsibility of the students in the semester to purchase these cards. Calls to the U.S. can be made from these phones, but it is much cheaper from Skype. Prepaid phone cards from the US do not work in the D.R..

Mail and Packages

Mail and packages can take weeks and up to months to be received in the D.R. Federal Express is generally the most reliable company with the quickest receiving time. Students can receive mail and packages at the following address:

Mision ILAC
Carretera Duarte Km. 7½
Licey al Medio, Santiago de los Caballeros
Republica Dominicana

*Zip codes are not used in the D.R..

Students will be shown the location of the post office should they want to send letters and post cards home. The postal service is relatively slow, but mail generally gets to where it needs to within reasonable time.

Transportation & Travel

Students will have the opportunity to travel during the semester. However, they *are not* permitted to travel into Santiago or to other parts of the Dominican Republic alone. Students must travel in pairs or in groups and must always have one of the program-provided cell phones when outside the ILAC center. Students must inform the Student Life Director of any travel plans prior to leaving Santiago. Students must know where they are going, what hotel/hostel they are staying at (if they are traveling overnight), and when/how they plan to return BEFORE leaving Santiago. Making travel plans on the fly or "winging it" is not a good plan. These are important safety precautions and significant policies that are meant to help in the event of an emergency.

The country has an extensive public transport system. You will learn about where the stops and stations are located, what hours they run, the appropriate fare, and safety issues regarding travel. *Students are NOT permitted to drive any vehicles or ride motorcycles at any point during the program, not even on vacation. Breaking this rule will result in removal from the program.*

Safety & Security

Your Student Life Director will inform you about safety and security issues in the D.R. during orientation as well as be your reference point throughout the semester. Students can expect to receive various safety tips and precautions, but students need to understand that good decision-making on their part is key to their own safety. The cautionary measures provided do not ensure the safety of the students, but rather serve as best practices designed with maintaining a safe environment. The affiliates of Creighton University maintain the rights granted to them through the nature of their job responsibilities to sanction students in both academic and disciplinary matters should it be found in violation of Creighton University policy.

The ILAC center has security guards that work 24 hours, 7 days a week. However, students still need to take precautions such as locking doors and being aware of any unfamiliar visitors.

Students should pass along the Student Life Director's contact information to their parents in case of an emergency. Parents or students should not hesitate to contact the Student Life Director with any questions, concerns, issues or emergencies.

Student Health

It is important that students keep the Student Life Director informed of any health related issues or concerns throughout the semester.

Remember that the excitement of the new experience will stress your mind and body. Take your vitamins, eat well, and try to get sufficient rest. Your body will need some time to adjust to eating unfamiliar foods and starting a different routine. At some point along your trip, and most likely in the campo immersions, you will experience diarrhea and/or constipation as well as dehydration. Students should drink plenty of water as soon as the day starts as it is the best form of avoiding dehydration and try to get as much fiber into their diet as possible. Food at the ILAC center and in the campos is clean and safe. Eating street food is one of the most common ways people get sick and is not recommended. Tap water is unsafe to drink and should be avoided. Students will be informed of the reliable water sources which are available at the ILAC Center. Bottled water and bottled beverages such as soda are safe. Processed ice is also safe. Generally if it appears uniformly cubed or tube like as in most restaurants it is made with filtered water.

While on Encuentro, you will have access to local hospitals. The main hospital that will provide health care to students is called Hospital Metropolitano de Santiago (HOMS). It was built just a few years ago and most people are pleasantly surprised on their first visit. You can visit the hospital's website at <http://homshospital.com/>. If you request to visit a hospital, if the Student Life Director decides a hospital visit is necessary, and/or there is an emergency, you will be accompanied by the Student Life Director for assistance. You will not be in the hospital or at clinics alone. In the DR, health care is not always at "First World" standards, and students may be evacuated in case of emergencies.

The ILAC center takes additional precautions to ensure that the facilities in Santiago are sprayed frequently for mosquitoes. However, there are times throughout the semester when mosquitoes are unavoidably present. Especially in the showers, make sure you wipe away excess standing water. Standing water equals mosquito larvae!

The administrators for the Encuentro Program including the ILAC Center have the right to adapt procedures related to health and wellness given circumstances that might arise with students in the Dominican Republic. This is consistent with the standards of conduct in the risk and responsibilities form signed by all participating students. Failure to comply with these procedures may preclude involvement in program-sponsored activities, immersions and trips.

Protecting Yourself

Below is some general information about preventing certain infections and diseases that exist in the Dominican Republic, but students should speak with their health provider for further information.

Diarrhea: The illness you are most likely to get while in the Dominican Republic is diarrhea, which can be caused by a change in food, exercise or living situation. Even harmless bacteria in a new country can cause diarrhea because your body is not used to them. The most effective treatment for mild, common diarrhea (lasting a few days, not accompanied by fever) is Pepto Bismol (no side effects, but cannot be used if you are allergic to aspirin). Lomotil and Imodium are commonly prescribed drugs for mild diarrhea, but these will not stop the infection from spreading and can mask a serious case of diarrhea so they should be used with caution.

A serious case of diarrhea is one which lasts more than several days, never lets up, causes a high fever, or is accompanied by blood or pus in the stool. This kind of diarrhea requires attention and is usually treated with antibiotics. Remember, it is important to drink plenty of liquids with any form of diarrhea. It is easy to become dehydrated, especially in the heat of the Caribbean. Tell your Student Life Director about any diarrhea lasting longer than 48 hours.

Although traveler's diarrhea is almost unavoidable, there are things you can do to reduce the chances of getting sick and lessen the severity of an illness. Remember to follow basic sanitation precautions—avoid letting cuts or blisters get dirty or infected, wash your hands before eating, eat only well-cooked food, wash fruits and vegetables with clean water and/or peel them before eating, drink only purified or boiled water. Water in the Dominican Republic should be considered unsafe to drink unless you are in a restaurant in the city where the water and ice are usually purified. Bottled water is supplied for your use at the ILAC Center and in the *campos*.

Infectious Hepatitis: There is no way to prevent infectious hepatitis, but you can greatly reduce the chance of contracting it by receiving a Havrix shot before you leave.

Tetanus (Lockjaw): If you have not had a booster in the past five years, you should receive one.

Typhoid: Typhoid is an infectious bacterial fever which attacks the intestines and is contracted through eating or drinking contaminated food or water. Your chances of getting Typhoid are reduced with a preventive injection or oral medication.

Dengue Fever: Dengue fever is a viral infection caused by the bite of female *Aedes* mosquitoes. It occurs more frequently during warm, humid seasons, and transmission is more intense in urban areas, including downtown business areas. Mosquitoes that transmit dengue (*Aedes* mosquitoes) are day biters. Be especially vigilant applying repellent during daytime hours when in areas of high dengue risk. Repellent with at least 30% Deet is recommended as it provides strong protection for 6 hours. Peak biting times are usually during the early morning hours and again from late afternoon to dusk. The risk is higher for those staying in places with nearby stagnant water reservoirs and no mosquito protection, but transmission can occur in any urban setting.

Symptoms include a sudden onset of high fever, headache, generalized weakness, and intense muscle, joint, and low back pain (hence the term, "break bone fever") within 3 to 14 days (on average 4 to 7 days). A subtle rash appears in up to half the people affected, although some have a bright red rash with scattered clear spots. Treatment is purely supportive. Those with persistent high fever should seek medical attention as soon as possible. *Dengue hemorrhagic fever* (DHF) and *dengue shock syndrome* (DSS) are rare but may occur in people who previously have been infected with one strain of dengue virus and are later infected by a different strain (there are 4 strains). DHF and DSS begin like classic dengue but progress to abdominal pain and vomiting.

Malaria: Malaria is an acute and sometime chronic infectious disease due to the presence of protozoan parasites within the red blood cells. It is transmitted to the human by the bite of the infected *Anopheles* mosquito. The blood of a human infected with malaria infects the mosquito and the cycle continues. Four different species of the causative organism Plasmodium, can cause different degrees of illness.

Periodic outbreaks of malaria have occurred in some tourist locations, such as Punta Cana, La Romana or the Haitian border areas. Thus, if traveling in a high-risk area, apply repellent from dusk to dawn. The risk also increases during wet seasons when accumulated water causes mosquitoes to breed.

Symptoms include nighttime fevers, chills, body aches, headaches, nausea, and vomiting and/or general malaise can range from mild to severe. Incubation, or the time before symptoms appear varies from 7 to 30 days.

There are medicinal regimens that may help you avoid Malaria (in addition to taking measures to repel mosquitos); however, there is no one method that can protect completely against the risks of contracting malaria. Chloroquine (taken weekly) is the recommended prophylaxis in the DR. This treatment should be started one week prior to possible exposure. Prophylaxis is recommended for people traveling to remote areas of the country, high outbreak areas and especially along the Haitian border.

Chikungunya: "Chikungunya is an illness caused by a virus that spreads through mosquito bites. The most common symptoms of chikungunya are fever and joint pain. Other symptoms may include headache, muscle pain, joint swelling, or rash. Chikungunya disease rarely results in death, but the symptoms can be severe and disabling. Most people who get sick feel better within a week. In some people, the joint pain may last for months or years. There is currently no vaccine or medicine to prevent chikungunya. The only way to prevent chikungunya is to prevent

mosquito bites. The mosquito that carries chikungunya virus can bite during the day and night, both indoors and outdoors, and often lives around buildings in urban areas.”

(<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/chikungunya-caribbean>)

Zika: The Global Engagement Office recommends that travelers follow the [health advisory](#) and [travel advisory](#) released by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) about the Zika virus and its potential impact on pregnant women and their fetuses. Travel to regions with ongoing Zika virus outbreaks is not recommended for women who are pregnant or women who are considering pregnancy. Specific areas where Zika virus transmission is ongoing are difficult to determine and likely to change over time, so it is critical that travelers consult the CDC updates frequently before and during travel. Currently, there is not vaccine to prevent or medicine to treat Zika, and travelers are highly encouraged to discuss the risks and means for reducing the risk of mosquito bites with their health provider in preparation for international travel.

General Preventative Measures against Mosquitos

Students are provided with a mosquito net for their beds by the ILAC center. Wearing pants and light colored clothes along with mosquito spray are the most practical ways to not attract mosquitoes.

Students should use a repellent containing the insecticide DEET (concentration 30 to 35%) or picaridin (concentration 20% or greater). Picaridin has a pleasant smell, an advantage over DEET. The repellent should be applied to all exposed non-sensitive areas of the body. Frequent application ensures continuous protection. The time of day and type of insects to be avoided determine when the repellent should be applied. Mosquitoes that transmit malaria (*Anopheles* mosquitoes) are night biters. Thus, if traveling in an area affected by Malaria (the Haitian boarder), be especially vigilant in applying repellent from dusk to dawn. Mosquitoes that transmit dengue (*Aedes* mosquitoes) are day biters, and students need to be especially vigilant applying repellent during daytime hours during high risk season. Peak biting times are usually during the early morning hours and again from late afternoon to dusk. The Student Life Director will keep students informed on high risk Dengue seasons.

Emergency Procedures

The Student Life Director will have access to student emergency contact information. Also, students are provided a contact list with important phone numbers and addresses. Additional emergency procedures will be discussed during orientation in the Dominican Republic.

Financial Issues in the D.R.

During the first week of orientation, you will be shown local, safe places to exchange money as well as safety tips for carrying your money around the country. In the past, there have been cases when students have lost their debit cards and are then left without money. If this should happen, let Student Life Director know in order to assist you in having a family member wire transfer money to you. This is a quick and easy process.

Money Gram: Should a student need cash sent to him or her while in the Dominican Republic, a quick and easy wire transfer can be sent from Money Gram (found in most Walmart stores and

CVS pharmacies) or Western Union locations (in many supermarkets). A code number will be given to the sender after following procedure at the Money Gram location. The sender should email this code number to the student. Then the student will go to Banco Popular, a bank in Santiago that receives Money Grams or a local Western Union office. The student should show his or her original passport to the bank teller as well as provide the code number, amount of money sent and the name of the sender. Wire transfers usually take less than a few minutes to receive. The sender pays the Money Gram/Western Union fee, which varies upon location.

Understanding how the exchange rate of US dollars to Dominican pesos works is something that becomes clearer the more time you spend in the D.R. An easy way to calculate how much things approximately cost in the D.R. is to think that 100 pesos is equal to about \$2.50. This will not give you an exact price, but it is a close estimate.

Emergency Contact Numbers in the Dominican Republic

(*caller not charged for long distance)

Margarita Dubocq (Academic Director): 829-333-6164

Kat Turco (Student Life Director): *402-253-7517 and (Dominican cell) 829-983-5386

ILAC (Spanish only after 5 p.m.): 809-736-0774

Radhalme Peña (Executive Director of ILAC): 809-841-0108

Transitioning Back after a Successful Semester:

Reorientation Before Leaving the Dominican Republic

Students will spend a reorientation week before leaving the D.R. with their Academic and Student Life Directors. A variety of topics will be covered from saying goodbye to the D.R. to the readjustment process. Several activities will be planned during this week as well as making a visit to each campo.

When your D.R. experience is nearing its end, you may or may not want to come home. Remember that “it’s a small world,” that you can keep in touch with new friends via mail, phone, and e-mail; and that you will probably be able to travel again sometime. If you are considering graduate school, returning as a volunteer or to work on a special project, or hoping to visit, think about contacts in the D.R. and at ILAC that can be used as future reference. Get names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of contacts at ILAC, friends, and host families.

Before you pack, remember that you will have to go through U.S. Customs when you arrive back in the States. All articles purchased abroad and in your possession when you return must be declared, as well as gifts given to you or purchased for another person. Customs declaration forms will be distributed on the plane and must be filled out before leaving the plane. If you purchase anything of value, it might be a good idea to save the receipts for the customs inspectors; requirements may vary from one inspector to another - one may ask you a few questions, another may have you unpack your bags entirely. More information will be given to you during reorientation.

Back Home in the U.S.

When you return, expect to experience reverse culture shock upon re-entry into U.S. society. It is difficult to realize how you will have changed during your time abroad, and how many things about home will have changed. It's common to feel you do not fit in, to miss the D.R., and perhaps to be shocked or unhappy by some aspects of U.S. culture that you now begin to notice because of the contrast.

What is unique about the program is that you will return to Creighton with this community and will also have the opportunity to meet with other students that have also participated in the program. Many groups continue meeting on a regular basis and even plan projects to continue giving back to the D.R. A follow-up retreat will be guided by the Campus Coordinator and you will quickly see that your D.R. experience will influence your decision to join different campus or off-campus organizations. Even when you leave the D.R., your Academic and Student Life Directors will always be willing to discuss your experience and readjusting back home.

Resources:

Important Contact Information

Rene Padilla, Ph.D.

Executive Director
Global Engagement Office
402-280-4745
rpadilla@creighton.edu

Michele Bogard, Ph.D.

Associate Vice Provost for Student Life
Division of Student Life
402-280-2775
Bogard@creighton.edu

Jill Muegge

Encuentro Dominicano Campus Coordinator
Global Engagement Office
402-280-4185
JillMuegge@creighton.edu

Kat Turco*

Student Life Director
402-253-7517
katturco@creighton.edu

Margarita Dubocq*

Academic Director
829-333-6164
margaritadubocq@creighton.edu

***Denotes staff living in the Dominican Republic**

Instagram: [CreightonintheDR](#)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/encdominicano>

Website: <http://www.creighton.edu/encuentro/>

Suggested Reading

Alvarez, Julia. In the Time of the Butterflies. (New York: Penguin, 1994). Work of fiction based on historical facts recounting the story of the Mirabal Sisters and Trujillo's 31-year despotism.

Atkins, G. Pope and Wilson, Larman C. The United States and the Trujillo Regime. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1972). A thorough, scholarly study.

Black, Jan Knippers. The Dominican Republic. (Winchester, MA: Allen and Unwin, Inc., 1986).

Bosch, Juan. The Unfinished Experiment: Democracy in the Dominican Republic. (New York: Praeger, 1964). An account by a former President.

Crassweller, Robert D. Trujillo: The Life and Times of a Caribbean Dictator. (New York: MacMillan, 1966). An excellent biography.

Danticat, Eldridge. The Farming of Bones. (Penguin Books, 1998). A historical novel about the Haitians in the DR in 1937.

Ferguson, James. Dominican Republic: Beyond the Lighthouse. (Latin American Bureau, 1992).

Kidder, Tracy. Mountains Beyond Mountains. (Random House, 2003). The biography of Dr. Paul Farmer and his current involvement in Haiti with Partners in Health.

Llosa, Mario Vargas. The Feast of the Goat. (2001). A wonderful historical novel about the people, times and the death of Trujillo.

Martin, John Bartlow. Overtaken by Events: the Dominican Crisis - From the Fall of Trujillo to the Civil War. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966). Long, fascinating account by a well-meaning U.S. Ambassador.

Sharpe, Kenneth Evan. Peasant Politics: Struggle in a Dominican Village. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977). Good, interesting.

Slater, Jerome. Intervention and Negotiation: The United States and the Dominican Revolution. (New York: Harper and Row, 1970). The best account of these events.

Wucker, Michele. Why the Cocks Fight: Dominican, Haitians, and the Struggle for Hispaniola. (Hill and Wang, 1999).

ILAC/CESI Center
Santiago, Dominican Republic
LODGING RESERVATION REQUEST

PLEASE RETURN TO:
Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC), Creighton University
2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE 68178
Omaha Office: Telephone 402/280-3179 // Fax: 402/280-1889
email: ilac@creighton.edu

Person requesting this reservation:

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Last Name | Middle Name | First Name |
|-----------|-------------|------------|

Organization (if applicable): _____ Group Sponsor: _____

If a group, please attach a list of the participants, their age, and gender

Address:

| | | | | |
|---------------|------|---------|----------|---------|
| Number/Street | City | State | Zip Code | Country |
| Telephone | Fax | E-mail: | | |

Emergency Contact Information:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Lodging Reservation

Arrival Date and Time at the ILAC Center:

Departure Date and Time from the ILAC Center:

Purpose of the visit:

Number of persons in the group: _____ Number of males: _____ Number of females: _____

Special housing arrangements (e.g., married; families; physical disability needs): _____

Airport Transportation

Do you need ground transportation to and from the airport? Yes _____ No _____ *If yes, indicate the date and time for arrival and departure, the airport, airline, and flight number. (There is a fee for this service.)*

**Please contact the Encuentro Student Life Director (katturco@creighton.edu) for current ILAC rates*