

CMDS Faculty-Led Study Abroad Course – May Interim 2020
Communication Disorders Experience in Mexico
May 16 – 24, 2020 Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

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Course Description

The purpose of this study abroad program is to give Communication Disorders students an opportunity to work with a Spanish speaking population. The program will provide a service learning opportunity that will immerse students in four sites in Mexico, including a “Pop-Up” clinic, an orphanage, a day care center for students with significant disabilities, and a local public school that serves students with special needs. Learning opportunities will be provided through a clinical communication disorders experience in a variety of different populations and settings. The class will spend 9 days in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Five of the days (weekdays) will be spent rotating within the four sites. The other days will be spent visiting cultural sites and activities within the Puerto Vallarta, Mexico area or traveling.

Course Objectives and Outcomes

International service learning makes a unique contribution to building global awareness, global partnerships and world peace. The purpose of the study abroad program is to enable CMDS students to expand the clinical skills they are learning in the class room to real life international applications and to work in a cross-cultural environment. In partnership with the orphanages, school, and day care facility, Truman CMDS students and faculty will provide service with the people of Puerto Vallarta, Mexico while learning about Mexican social, cultural, historical, economic, political and religious history, and present day reality. Students will enjoy the following benefits from the experience:

- Cultural international exposure – a rich international experience designed to significantly enhance students’ academic life at Truman State University
- Vision of how they can make a difference in the world
- Direct application of their education in an unconventional setting
- Opportunity to share their knowledge and expertise
- Learn to work as a team and collaborate as a group
- Communication and presentation skills
- Professor-student mentored learning – the opportunity to build close connections with other members of the University community (instructors and other students).
- A small-class educational environment that will facilitate cross-cultural learning and that will add to the diversity of their academic experience (this diversity may exist as a result of self-guided study, inquiry-based activities, interdisciplinary approaches, and/or language immersion).

As a result of readings, lectures, in-country activities and the service learning opportunity, students will:

- Relate classroom study to real-world situations abroad through critical analysis and synthesis of course materials
- Identify issues and problems, formulate questions, in the field of Communication Disorders that reflects understanding of a particular international context
- Understand and appreciate cultural diversity through the study of other cultures as well as their own
- Self-reflect, as they develop an understanding of how culture influences behavior, and in turn, how cultural differences impact cultural interactions.
- Understand the impact of culture on communication, speech-language development and disorders across cultural groups.
- Understand the social, political, and organizational policies regarding culture and language (including ASHA policies)
- Determine and use assessment/intervention practices that limit bias
- Demonstrate an understanding of the attitudes and tolerance of hearing, speech, and language disorders in different cultural groups
- Discuss the effects of cultural beliefs on prevention, assessment, and intervention of communication disorders across the lifespan.
- Integrate cultural information into appropriate assessment and treatment strategies.

Prerequisites

Communication Disorders students must complete CMDS 380: Principles of Clinical Management or its equivalent and meet the requirements of CMDS 101 & 301 with the completion of 25 observation hours. In addition, students must have completed at least one semester as a Clinical Assistant, on-site, in the Truman Speech and Hearing Clinic, or completed at least one semester as a clinician (enrolled in CMDS 480 or CMDS 681G). No language requirements are involved. While it would be helpful for CMDS students to know some Spanish, the sites that students will be working in teach some English and many of the teachers/staff speak English. Additional translators will also be available at each site. Students with an existing remediation or essential skills plan may not be eligible.

Credit Hours

This course counts for 3 hours of 500-level elective credit (CMDS 510/510G) in Communication Disorders. Like all study abroad courses, the hours will also fulfill the Intercultural Perspective of the Liberal Studies Program.

Course Requirements

- Submit an application and statement of interest and objectives
- Attend preparatory meetings
- Read all assigned material
- Select a presentation topic and group to gather preliminary information
- Keep a daily journal during the trip
- Participate in the reflective learning process while on the trip

- Participate in all in-country events
- Expand upon presentation topic through on-site interviews and recording observations
- Using your preliminary research and information gathered while on the trip; create a Power Point presentation with your group to present fall 2020

Study Abroad Orientation: An important part of studying abroad is being prepared for the experience before going. Students will research basic facts about Puerto Vallarta, Mexico and the surrounding areas. This phase of the course will assist students to prepare themselves mentally, complete needed documentation, become aware of safe health and travel issues, learn the basics about the government and social systems, and develop learning strategies to improve their interaction with and understanding of the culture. Through various means (e.g., publications, discussions) the orientation will provide students with access to information, tools and support that will assist them in becoming better global citizens. In particular students will be able to:

- Demonstrate self-reliance (including the ability to mitigate risks of international travel);
- Enhance the student community (showing mutual support and respect);
- Integrate with the local community (showing respect for and openness towards others).

Suggested Reading

Langdon, H. (2008). *Assessment and Intervention for Communication Disorders in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations*. Clifton Park, NY: Thomson Delmar Learning. ISBN-13: 978-1-4180-0139-1

Fodor's Puerto Vallarta, 6th Edition: With Guadalajara and Riviera Nayarit (Fodor's Gold Guides) by Fodor's. ISBN-13: 978-1-101-87814-9 (2015)

Course Schedule

Part One: Preparation

Following application and acceptance into the program, students will prepare for the trip by completing assigned readings and attending two (2) orientation sessions (February & March 2020) and seven (7) preparation classes (to be held weekly beginning the week of March 16, 2020 - May 8, 2020). The orientation sessions will ensure students complete the necessary paperwork, understand the rules and regulations, and discuss necessities for traveling. In addition, students will learn through seven class sessions the speech-language and screening protocols used while working in the Puerto Vallarta sites, key conversational phrases and terminology specific to the clinical work they will be conducting and the cultural differences that may impact their experience. Activities will be created in the classes to utilize during the experience and to leave with the locations and further educate the staff. Finally, before leaving for Puerto Vallarta, students will choose a topic relating to the trip for a research presentation that will occur fall 2020. As part of their preparation, students will begin gathering articles relating to their topic during this time.

Part Two: Experience

The group will leave, in one group, on Saturday, May 16, 2020 from the St. Louis or Kansas City International airport to travel to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico and will arrive in Puerto Vallarta that afternoon. Monday, May 18, 2020 students will begin fulltime work at the Pop Up clinic, an orphanage, school, and/or day care facility. Full-time work at these sites will occur each weekday of the trip. Students will spend a full 8 hour day, each work day engaged in service activities. On Sunday, May 17th and Saturday, May 23, 2020, the group will spend time participating in tour excursions while exploring the Puerto Vallarta area and Mexican culture. The group will depart Puerto Vallarta on Sunday, May 24, 2020 and return to STL or KC International airport (typically a late evening arrival). ***Transportation to and from STL or KC airport will be the responsibility of the student.***

Students' experiences will be completed in a local "Pop-Up" clinic, an orphanage (Casa Hogar "Maximo" Cornejo), a public school (CAM 21), and a day care facility (Pasitos de Luz) for children with significant developmental disabilities. CMDS students will conduct speech-language and hearing screenings both in Spanish and English, provide instructional activities in English and Spanish that promote the development of oral and written language skills and literacy, and serve as a resource for teachers/caregivers and volunteers. At the day care, CMDS students will be directly involved in feeding/dysphagia therapy and consultation and will provide ongoing support to see how poverty impacts education, language and literacy, and technology and how that impact is reflected in the everyday lives of people living in the Puerto Vallarta area. During these experiences, students will have the opportunity to expand on their presentation/research topic through conducting interviews with individuals (caregivers, other professionals, parents, etc...) and recording their observations.

Part Three: Journal and Final Reflection

Using research as well as information gathered through personal observations and interviews, students will prepare a 10 minute stand and deliver PowerPoint presentation related to their chosen topic. Presentations should focus on what students have learned about their topic through research as well as personal experiences in Mexico. It may be helpful to consider similarities and differences between Mexico and the United States. This presentation will take place in fall 2020 (date TBD). Special considerations such as a video submission of the presentation may be an alternative option for students who may have graduated or are on internship during fall 2020.

Potential topics or areas of interest include:

- *Perceptions of individuals with special needs/disabilities
- *Special needs services provided in schools
- *Healthcare similarities and differences between Mexico and the US
- *Geography and location of Puerto Vallarta
- *Language
- *Poverty
- *Family organization
- *culture of Puerto Vallarta
- *The sites visited in Puerto Vallarta

Grading

- 25% Service Learning Journal
- 25% Participation in the reflective learning process and events while on trip
- 25% Participation in orientation and preparation classes
- 25% Participation in Post-trip Presentation

Transportation

A group flight will be arranged by Truman State University and CMDS faculty who will accompany the group. All students enrolled in the course will travel together. There are no exceptions. All transportation to and from the sites while in Puerto Vallarta will be arranged by CMDS faculty.

Housing

The group will stay at the Oasis Hostel in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. The Oasis Hostel is conveniently located on the Puerto Vallarta bus route and is within walking distance of convenience stores, shops and restaurants. The Oasis offers a daily complimentary breakfast, cable television in the lounge, and wireless internet access throughout the hostel. Faculty members will reside with the students at the Oasis Hostel during the entire experience.

Tour Excursions

Under no circumstances will students be permitted to travel independently. All excursion and site visits will be with the group.

TASK Links: The following is a list of the Knowledge and Skills for Clinical Certification addressed in MEX 510 – Study in Mexico

(Successful completion of the course requirements provides knowledge in a content area equivalent to the level(s) described below:

***A rating of one (1) to the right of the heading indicates introductory-level exposure of knowledge/skill as a result of participating in clinical practice.*

***A rating of two (2) to the right of the heading indicates the fundamentals of the knowledge/skill should be grasped as a result of participating in clinical practice.*

***A rating of (3) to the right of the heading indicates a proficiency level to be expected from a beginning practitioner as a result of completing clinical practice).*

Standard IV-B

The applicant must demonstrate knowledge of basic human communication and swallowing processes, including their biological, neurological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural bases. The applicant must have demonstrated the ability to integrate information pertaining to normal and abnormal human development across the life span.

- **Cultural (3)**
- **Swallowing Processes**
Cultural (2)

Standard IV-C

Social aspects of communication (challenging behavior, ineffective social skills, lack of communication.

- **Etiologies (3)**
- **Characteristics (3)**

Standard IV-D

For each of the areas (below) specified in Standard IV-C, the applicant must have demonstrated current knowledge of the principles and methods of prevention, assessment, and intervention for people with communication and swallowing disorders, including consideration of anatomical/physiological, psychological, developmental, and linguistic and cultural correlates.

- **Articulation Prevention(3)**
- **Receptive and expressive language (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, prelinguistic communication and paralinguistic communication) in speaking, listening, reading, writing**
- **Hearing, including the impact on speech and language**
 - **Prevention (2)**
- **Swallowing**
 - Prevention (2)**

- **Social aspects of communication (including challenging behavior, ineffective social skills, and lack of communication opportunities);**
 - **Prevention (3)**
 - **Assessment (3)**
 - **Intervention (3)**

Standard V-B

The applicant for certification must have completed a program of study that included experiences sufficient in breadth and depth to achieve the following skills outcomes:

2. Intervention

- a. Develop setting-appropriate intervention plans with measurable and achievable goals that meet clients'/patients' needs. Collaborate with clients/patients and relevant others in the planning process.**
- b. Implement intervention plans (involve clients/patients and relevant others in the intervention process).**
- c. Select or develop and use appropriate materials and instrumentation for prevention and intervention.**
- d. Measure and evaluate clients'/patients' performance and progress.**
- e. Modify intervention plans, strategies, materials, or instrumentation as appropriate to meet the needs of clients/patients.**
- f. Complete administrative and reporting functions necessary to support intervention.**
- g. Identify and refer clients/patients for services as appropriate.**

Receptive and Expressive Language (3)

Swallowing (2)

Social Aspects of Communication (3)

3. Interaction and Personal Qualities

- a. Communicate effectively, recognizing the needs, values, preferred mode of communication, and cultural/linguistic background of the client/patient, family, caregivers, and relevant others. (3)**

