**Is This Course Right For You?**

**Course: CCS 300 *NICARAGUA: NATION BUILDING AFTER REVOLUTION***

**Course requirements:** Weekly class meetings @ Thursdays, 12:00-—2:00 pm tentatively

# Graded assignments:

Attendance **10%**

Cultural Competence Assessment **15%**

Spanish language 10% (*Dulolingo* online resource) **10%**

Group presentation on assigned topic on Nicaragua **25%**

Portfolio, journal, digital narration, 2 cultural events with *reaction* essay / signature assignment **40%**

**Travel required:** Nicaragua for 10 days in May (especially the Waukesha partner-city of Granada.) You will meet village leaders, visit homes and workshops specific to the topics you are interested in, talk with farmers, nature guides, and women taking classes at the Learning Centers, visit orphanages, and meet rural and urban artists. Travel with W/NP will take place off of the beaten path in beautiful, rural and urban areas. A well-developed variety of experiences are offered, an English-speaking tour guide, an air- conditioned bus, and visits to in-country tourism "hot spots."

# Transportation:

All visitors need a passport valid for at least six months to enter Nicaragua. Upon arrival, U.S. citizens receive a 30-day or 90-day visa automatically. Air travel to Nicaragua. In country: tour buses, auto, bicycle; tour boats.

**Location(s):** Granada, Nicaragua (partner city to Waukesha, Wisconsin

Climate:Nicaragua has a tropical climate. Just as in the other Central American countries, there are two seasons: the dry and the raining season. During the **dry season (January - June)** there is virtually no rain and trees and plants start to dry out. Once the rains come around June, July, everything starts growing and the yellow plants and leafless trees turn green and start blossoming. In August and September, it often rains once a day.

# Physical Requirements:

* It is recommended that North American visitors drink purified bottled water.
* The dry season, from November through May, is the best time to visit Nicaragua.
* Pick clothes that are light and breathable in the heat, For sun protection, don’t forget a shade hat that covers the back of your neck.
* No matter what your style, it is very important to look clean. Having a neat personal appearance is important to all Latin Americans, and you’ll find being well groomed will open a lot more doors. In the countryside, Nicaraguan men typically don’t wear shorts, unless they are at the beach or at home.
* Roads are rough, even in cities, so good walking shoes will ease your trip considerably; lightweight hiking boots or just sturdy sneakers
* **Accommodations:** Homestays with Nicaraguanmilies (Las Mercedes, Cedro Galán, Granada)
* **Cultural considerations:** Nicaragua means *“here united with the water.”* The merging of different cultures within Nicaragua has caused the dawn of a creative, lively and blissful culture. Nicaraguans are appreciated for their natural warmth, hospitality and wisdom. The country is known as the land of poets, and Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío is the father of Spanish-American literary movement, Modernism. The rhythmic marimbas and folkloric dances give vibrancy to fiestas across the country and the beautiful work of skilled artists spreads an understanding of Nicaragua’s history and nature.
* Festive events are often loud, joyous celebrations that attract large crowds with dance, music and traditional interpretations. Each city and town has an official Saint, also known as the ‘***Santo Patrono’,*** which have been designated since colonial times. As well as honoring these Saints with gifts in exchange for blessings, celebrations take place called ***‘Fiestas Patrinales’*** that can last several days and are colorful, folkloric events. The highlight of these festivals tend to be the philharmonic bands called *‘chicheros’,* where trumpets, clarinets, drums and a cymbal come together to create an energetic melody.
* ***Pacific*** – A mixture of the indigenous and Spanish culture resulting in a wide range of diverse music and dance with flutes and drums accompanied by dancers in Spanish garb demonstrating the duality of cultures.

## **Food:** Rice, beans and corn are **staples of Nicaraguan cuisine.** Nicaraguan grass-fed beef results in juicy steaks, often cooked over wood-burning grills. Since the country borders on the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, and is home to one of the largest lakes in the Americas, fresh seafood is readily available (chicken, vegetables, fruits)

* **Not covered in the budget:** Activities during free time and some meals during travel.

**Free time:** Beach trips, fieldtrips. free day in Granada including boat tour, canopy tour and hike; selected service learning projects; gardening, composting, library projects, volcano and national parks;

**Things to do:** Volcano Board, Exlore Granada’s architecture, Eat a *fritanga* (local food served from a sidewalk vendor) or *nacatamal* (a moist tamale filled with pork, chicken, veggies or other fillings and wrapped in a banana leaf to cook); shop at the Nica markets; hike a volcano at night; surf or chill out on a beach; party at a festival;

**Electronic communication:**

Students are encouraged to check in family and friends during their free time but should be engaged in the course during CCE time.

# Parental Involvement: Students should communicate the trips details with their family. However all students must be enrolled in the course in order to travel.