

# Nicaragua

## Revolution, Transformation, and Civil Society

Explore the legacy of the Sandinista Revolution and its influence on Central American political and social movements. Examine current challenges to democracy and civil society in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

## Coursework

**Please note:** This program will have credit distribution and/or other curriculum changes beginning in the fall 2012 semester. Please visit [www.sit.edu/NUR](http://www.sit.edu/NUR) for details.

### Revolution, Transformation, and Civil Society Seminar

LACB 3000 / 6 credits / 90 class hours

An interdisciplinary course conducted in Spanish with required readings and relevant educational excursions. Students examine the historical development and short- and long-term impacts of Central American revolutionary movements from the social, political, and cultural contexts of contemporary Nicaragua; particular emphasis is placed on the role of Nicaraguan civil society and US-Nicaragua relations. Lecturers include Nicaraguan academics and leaders of civil society, including social and political activists, from institutions such as the Centro de Estudios Internacionales, Instituto Martin Luther King de la Universidad Politécnica de Nicaragua, Universidad Centroamericana, and Centro de Prevención de la Violencia.

Seminar topics typically include:

#### *Political and Economic History*

Independence and the formation of political parties; Sandino's rebellion: 1927–1934; US involvement in Central America and the Caribbean; the Somoza family dictatorship, the origins of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN), the Sandinista Revolution, and the Contra War in the 1980s; present political perspectives; economic history, neoliberalism, privatization, and structural adjustment programs; Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA).

#### *Social Movements and Civil Society*

Grassroots movements and social change; migration; Nicaraguan women's movements; social impact of economic models; multi-service cooperatives, *maquilas*, and community-based initiatives.

#### *Culture of Peace*

Peaceful democratic transition; reconciliation; Culture of Peace theory and practice; human rights as the pillars of a Culture of Peace; civil rights and economic rights; citizen security

and youth; experiences of peacebuilding; economic issues of free trade versus fair trade.

#### *Caribbean Coast Culture and Identity*

Indigenous rights; Caribbean Coast history; aspirations and frustrations of regional autonomy; Creole and Garifuna culture; community health and resource management.

#### *El Salvador: A Comparative Lens*

El Salvador's civil war; the role of the United States; the 1992 Peace Accords; the Truth Commission and reconciliation; challenges to the current Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional (FMLN) government; community-based initiatives; migration.

#### *Educational Excursions*

The program includes three in-depth field trips. The first, in the rural northern area of Nicaragua, focuses on sustainable agriculture development models and includes a rural stay in Matagalpa. The second is an excursion to El Salvador, where participants learn about Salvadoran history, society, and more general issues of regional integration, and have opportunities to meet and discuss issues with citizens from a wide range of backgrounds. Students also travel to Bluefields and Pearl Lagoon on the Caribbean Coast and meet with representatives of Creole and Garifuna communities to discuss issues of autonomy and indigenous rights.

#### **Intensive Language Study: Spanish**

SPAN 2000–4000 / 4 credits / 60 class hours

Emphasis on speaking, reading, and writing skills through classroom and field instruction. Based on in-country evaluation, including oral proficiency testing, students are placed in intensive intermediate or advanced classes, with further language practice in homestays, lectures, and field visits.

#### **Field Study Seminar**

ANTH 3500 / 2 credits / 30 class hours

A course in the concepts of learning across cultures and from field research. Introduction



**Credits** 16

**Duration** Fall/Spring 15 weeks

**Program Base** Managua

**Language Study** Spanish

**Homestay** Managua, 7 weeks

**Rural Visit/Homestay** Agricultural cooperative in Matagalpa; El Salvador, 1 week

**Other Accommodations** Hostels, private homes, or small hotels

**Independent Study Project** 4 weeks

**Prerequisites** Three recent semesters of college-level Spanish or equivalent and the ability to follow coursework in Spanish, as assessed by SIT.

to the Independent Study Project. Material includes cross-cultural adaptation and skills building; project selection and refinement; appropriate methodologies; field study ethics and the World Learning/SIT Human Subjects Review Policy; developing contacts and finding resources; developing skills in observation and interviewing; gathering, organizing, and communicating data; maintaining a work journal.

#### **Independent Study Project**

ISPR 3000 / 4 credits / 120 class hours

Conducted at an approved location in Nicaragua appropriate to the project. **Sample topic areas:** case study of a rural agricultural cooperative; organizing women in rural areas; structural adjustment and the healthcare sector; women's response to the post-1996 ideological counter-reforms; Central American immigration; conflict resolution and reconciliation; decentralization and local autonomy.