

## Tour Proposal Ecuador Updated: April 2019

### Location and Host City: Quito

On the imaginary line that divides the globe into North and South, Ecuador stands as one of only 17 countries considered as mega-diverse. Ecuador is “home to about 3,300 species of orchids, more than 1,500 species of birds, 350 species of reptiles, 450 species of amphibians, and more than 20,000 vascular plants” This diversity is also reflected on its people, with an ethnically mixed population representing Spanish and indigenous roots. Ecuador is one of the smallest countries in South America and lies 9,000 feet above sea level. Quito, our host city, is the capital of Ecuador. Quito was the first city named by UNESCO a “world heritage” city in 1978, and recently was named "cultural capital" of Latin America.

With a population of 2.4 million, Quito offers one of the best preserved colonial centers in the world, combining a rich history with a contemporary metropolitan image. **National Geographic named Quito one of the top 10 places to visit in the world.**

### Participants

Our study tour has welcomed faculty and/or administrators, current or retired teachers, graduate students at two or four-year institutions, and professionals with an interest in higher education. Participants do not need to be experts on the study tour topic or region. Our study tour is designed to serve individuals interested in examining issues in education from an interdisciplinary perspective. The study tour is planned for a minimum of 8 participants and a maximum of 20 participants.

A few of the institutions represented by past participants in our study tours include:

Buffalo State University	Higher Learning Commission	NorthWest Missouri State
Baruch College	Georgia Southern University	University of Oklahoma
Boston College	University of Minnesota	University of St. Thomas
University of Denver	University of Michigan	University of Richmond
Fresno State University	Eastern Michigan University	Cardinal Stritch University
U. of California – Long Beach	Michigan State University	Rutgers University
Columbia University	Northeastern University	UW-Madison
University of Florida	University of Texas – El Paso	NYU

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## **Accommodations**

The group will stay in a local hotel in Quito. Tour fee includes all Hotel Accommodations

## **Study Tour Leadership**

Dr. Raul Leon is an Associate Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs at Eastern Michigan University. Born and raised in Ecuador, Dr. Leon has a passion for traveling and discovering new places. Dr. Leon earned his B.A. in International Relations from St. Cloud State University (SCSU). He also holds a master's degree in International Public Affairs (International Development in Latin America) and a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, both degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Dr. Leon has several years of experience working closely with international education programs and initiatives. These experiences include working with the Center for International Studies at SCSCU, developing marketing campaigns for over 100 study abroad programs with the University of Wisconsin-Madison, building strong relationships between international students and the campus community with International Reach, and serving as a program coordinator for the International Learning Community with University Housing.

In addition to these experiences at the university level, Dr. Leon is a native from Ecuador and has provided leadership for My Ecuador Trip, organizing and leading educational and cultural trips. Aligned with his professional interests, in 2012, Dr. Leon co-organized an international colloquium at the University of Leeds (U.K.) focusing on the experiences of males of color across the globe. During 2012, Dr. Leon was also invited by the Universidad Catolica de Concepcion (Chile) to conduct a workshop for over 250 students, faculty, and administrators, examining current higher education challenges and opportunities in the United States. Dr. Leon has organized several educational tours to Ecuador and has led tours focus on educational policy for the past 8 years.

## **Academic Site Visits**

The main goal for our international tour is to expose graduate students, faculty and administrators to the general characteristics of higher education in Ecuador. Our study tour offers participants the opportunity to visit local institutions, schools, colleges, and attend lectures, discussions, and events aligned with the main theme of the tour. Highlights from our past Study Tours include visits to:

- Visits to local universities
- Visits to local K-12 schools
- Meet local professors, scholars, and administrators
- Meetings with local student representatives
- Learning about life and culture in Quito through seminars and presentations

## **Site Visits**

Our study tours are carefully designed to offer participants the opportunity to explore Quito and familiarize with the local culture. All daily excursions are carefully designed and make up



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an itinerary that is fun, enriching, and safe. A staff member from My Ecuador Trip will serve as a group leader and will guide the group through their journey. Transportation is provided for every tour.

### Degree of Difficulty Activities Organized

**Academic Site Visits:** For academic site visits participants should be prepared for walking and or standing for some periods of time. Some days there will be no walking and other days walking time may exceed 1-2 hours (broken up into shorter blocks). There are many occasions when we are not walking consistently but we are on our feet for several hours over the course of the day. For instance, when we make site visits, we may have to stand up to listen to a speaker. This standing could be interspersed with short walks as we tour institutions or visit the rainforest for and scheduled activity.

**Excursions and Tours.** Our tours involve moderate hikes in the city, rainforests, plains, and national parks. Our tour involves getting out of vehicles, walking on uneven terrain, and in some cases hiking in places with high elevation and some humidity. Our tours are suited for anyone who can walk up to 2-5 km (1.5 - 3 miles) per day. In the past, we have welcomed participants with different medical conditions and abilities. Please send us an email if you would like to find out more information about the level of activity for each tour and accommodations

### Budget and Tour Fee

Below, the following table includes tour fees (**per person**) for the program considering a minimum of **8 participants**, and **11 Days / 10 Nights** of accommodations in double occupancy. The next section includes additional details.

ESTIMATED BUDGET	Double Room (Double Room / 2 Beds / 1 Private Bathroom)	Travel w/ Family (Double Room / 1 Bed / 1 Private Bathroom)	Single Traveler (Single Room/ 1 Bed / 1 Private Bathroom)
Study Tour Fee	\$2700	\$2500	\$3200
Roundtrip Airfare (Estimate from Detroit)	\$850	\$850	\$850
Extra Cash	\$150	\$150	150
Medical Travel Insurance Coverage	\$50	\$50	\$50
<b>TOTAL COST ESTIMATE</b>	<b>\$ 3,750</b>	<b>\$ 3,550</b>	<b>\$ 4,250</b>

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### **\*Tour Fee and Accommodations:**

- a) Each double room has one bathroom
- b) Traveling w/colleague: You can both select to room together in a double room with a private bathroom.
- c) We recommend you have extra cash to cover additional expenses not included in our tour. Past participants report spending between \$100 - 150 (i.e., souvenirs, tips, alcoholic drinks, miscellaneous).
- d) Trip Fee includes: 10 breakfasts, 10 Lunches, and 7 Dinners
- d) All rates are per person

### **What is Included in the Tour Fee?**

-  Accommodations (10 Nights)
-  Transportation for tours and activities
-  Meals (10 Breakfasts, 10 Lunches and 7 Dinners)
-  Academic Seminar (Lectures, Site Visits, and Tours)
-  Guided Excursions and Local Expert
-  Transfer from and to airport in Quito
-  Entrance Fee for Local Attractions Included in Itinerary
-  Pre-departure information and Staff Assistance
-  Bottled Water for Full Trip
-  Internet in Accommodations

### **What is not Included in the Tour Fee?**

-  International Airfare
-  Additional Snacks and Meals not Included in Itinerary
-  Additional Transportation Services not Included in Itinerary
-  Souvenirs and Miscellaneous
-  Tipping and Gratuities (Under \$40 per person for entire trip)
-  Alcoholic Drinks
-  Travel and Medical Emergency Insurance (Price Range: \$40-70)

### **Booking your Airfare**

Airfare is not included on the price of this tour. Because our participants come from many different places, you will book your ticket from the location is most convenient to you! For instance, several of our participants book round trip tickets to Quito from Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Chicago, Detroit, or New York. Price ranges between \$700 – 1100. Most participants will flight directly to Quito from MIAMI, Houston, or Atlanta after their first connection (Quito is only a 3.5 hour flight from Miami). We will provide detail info about departing and arriving times for airfare booking.

### **Vaccinations**

All our programs take place in locations where no vaccinations are needed. These areas have no risk of malaria or yellow fever.

### **Visas**

At the present time, U.S. citizens do not need a visa to travel to Ecuador for a period shorter than 90 days. If you are **not a U.S. citizen**, you must check with your own government agency and/or the consulates of all countries visited for entry and visa requirements for your nationality.

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## Education Study Tour Sample Itinerary

Date	SAMPLE Site Visits
Day 1 May 6 (W)	Arrival to Quito: Evening (May 6, 2020)
Day 2 May 7 (Th)	<p><b>Morning:</b> Breakfast 09:00 AM</p> <p>Seminar Orientation &amp; Introduction Presentations / Learning Session / Seminar Debrief 10:00 – 12:00</p> <p><b>Afternoon:</b> Cultural Visit Colonial Quito (Colonial Cathedrals and Plazas) 1:30 - 4:30 PM</p>
Day 3 May 8 (F)	<p><b>Morning:</b> Academic Visit K12 School 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM</p> <p><b>Afternoon:</b> Cultural Visit Guayasamín Art and Sculpture Museum The Chappell of Mankind 2:00 – 4:00 PM</p> <p>Presentations / Learning Session / Seminar Debrief 4:30 – 6:00 PM</p> <p><b>Evening:</b> Cultural Visit La Ronda Colonial Neighborhood 6:00 PM - 11:00 PM</p>
Day 4 May 9 (Sa)	<p><b>Morning:</b> Otavalo Indigenous Market 8:00 – 1:30 PM</p> <p><b>Afternoon:</b> Touristic Visit Yahuarcocha Lake 2:30 – 5:30 PM</p>

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<p>Day 5 May 10 (Su)</p>	<p><b>Morning:</b> Touristic Visit Teleferico Gondola Ride / Pichincha Volcano 9:00 - 12:00</p> <p><b>Afternoon:</b> Touristic Visit Virgen of Panecillo Landmark 12:30 – 1:30 PM</p> <p>Presentations / Learning Session / Seminar Debrief 4:30 – 6:30 PM</p>
<p>Day 6 May 11 (M)</p>	<p><b>Morning:</b> Academic Visit University / College Visit 9:00 – 2:00 PM</p> <p><b>Afternoon:</b> Free</p> <p><b>Evening:</b> Presentations / Learning Session / Seminar Debrief 6:00 – 7:30 PM</p>
<p>Day 7 May 12 (T)</p>	<p><b>Morning:</b> Touristic Visit Papallacta Hot Springs 09:00 – 2:00 PM</p> <p><b>Evening:</b> Presentations / Learning Session / Seminar Debrief 6:30 – 8:30 PM</p>
<p>Day 8 May 13 (W)</p>	<p><b>Morning:</b> Academic Visit K12 School Visit 9:00 – 12:30</p> <p><b>Afternoon:</b> Cultural Visit La Basilica del Voto Nacional Temple 2:00 - 4:30 PM</p> <p><b>Evening:</b> Presentations / Learning Session / Seminar Debrief 5:30 – 7:30 PM</p>
<p>Day 9 May 14 (Th)</p>	<p><b>Morning:</b> Academic Visit K12 School 9:30 – 12:30 PM</p>

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	<p><b>Afternoon:</b> Academic Visit College / University Visit 2:30 – 5:00 PM</p>
<p>Day 10 May 15 (F)</p>	<p><b>Morning:</b> Cultural Visit Quetzal Chocolate Factory 11:00 – 12:30 (Depart Quito 8:30 AM)</p> <p>Touristic Visit Mindó Cloud Forest (Waterfall Hike and Exploration) 1:00 – 4:00 PM</p> <p><b>Afternoon:</b> Return to Quito</p>
<p>Day 11 May 16 (Sa)</p>	<p><b>Morning:</b> Cultural Visit Tulipe Archeological Site Museum 10:00 -12:30 PM</p> <p><b>Afternoon:</b> Cultural and Touristic Visit Pululahua Ecological Reserve Volcano Crater Inti-Nan Museum / Middle of the World 02:00 - 4:30</p> <p><b>Evening:</b> Presentations / Learning Session / Seminar Debrief 6:30 – 8:30 PM</p> <p>Airport Transfer (8:30 PM) Departure</p>

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## **SAMPLE OF TOURISTIC / CULTURAL SITE VISITS**

### **Arrive to Quito - Welcome to Ecuador**

Planned Arrival Time: Evening. Welcome to Quito. Your exciting adventure in Ecuador begins with a fantastically orchestrated itinerary. Quito is home to beautiful colonial cathedrals, elegant old mansions, captivating museums, and probably the best weather on the entire planet (average temperature 65 -70 degrees year-round). Quito is located in the beautiful Andes Mountains and is recognized for having the best-preserved colonial center in the world. Private transportation and a staff member will welcome you at the local airport and bring you to your accommodations. Rest, relax, and prepare for a great journey. Group welcome meeting and orientation the following morning.

### **Program Orientation**

Welcome to Ecuador! We are excited to have you here! This morning you will meet other participants and our staff. The program orientation will provide an overview of our host city, highlight logistic information, describe day-to-day plans, and answer any questions you may have.

### **Educational Site Visits**

#### **Artisanal Craft Market**

Visiting a local artisan craft market is the perfect opportunity to mingle with locals and visitors findings that perfect souvenir. In Quito's Artisan Handcraft Market, you will find half of a city block filled with crafts stalls. As you walk into this market, you will find hundred of vendors offering a huge array of crafts, most of which are traditional Ecuadorian handicrafts. A visit to this place could make you the proud owner of alpaca wool, scarves, jewelry, a llama rug, or a number of other souvenirs. This is the kind of place where you can get willingly lost, but will certainly find the perfect souvenir

#### **Pululahua Crater**

We will begin our journey heading to the northeast. We will take advantage of the morning sun and visit Pululahua crater. The Pululahua (dormant volcano) has a 3 km-wide crater and last erupted approximately 2,400 years ago. This is a breathtaking place where colorful plants, mountains, and farms come together to create a truly magic setting.

#### **Middle of the World**

Visiting the "Mitad del Mundo" (Middle of the World) is one of the most iconic tours you can take part in Ecuador. Only 35 minutes from Quito, you will come across the Equatorial line, latitude 0°, a place where scientific expeditions led by Charles Marie de la Condamine established the exact point for the middle of the world and confirmed predictions regarding the earth's measurement and shape. This location is where Ecuador derives its name from. In the middle of the world, you can place one foot on each hemisphere. Here you will find

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“Ciudad Mitad del Mundo,” a replica of a colonial town. This city offers tourists a wide range of attractions such as the ethnographic museum, an art gallery, handicraft stores, and the impressive Middle of the World monument. Our visit includes a trip to the local museum where you will test your scientific knowledge of gravity and natural forces.

### **Teleferico Sky Lift**

Quito is the highest capital city in the world at an *elevation* of 9,350 feet (2,800 meters above sea level). While in Quito, it is fitting that you reach for the sky and visit Quito's famous Sky Lift. You start this adventure at 9,350 ft at the city level and arrive at the top of the ride located on the hills of the active Pichincha volcano at 15,000 ft. From the top, you will have a spectacular view of Quito and incomparable Andean landscapes that provides a one-of-a-kind setting for photography aficionados. Be ready to walk among clouds and feel on the top of the world.

### **National Basilica**

Inspired by father Julio Matovelle and designed by French architect Emilio Tarlier, the Basilica was constructed in remembrance of the consecration of Ecuador to the *Sacred Heart of Jesus*. Standing at 460ft long, the basilica is the most important work of neo-Gothic Ecuadorian architecture in the country and one of the most representative of the Americas. Situated in the center of Quito, the Basilica is the largest neo-Gothic basilica in the America, incorporating various local themes representing native animals such as armadillos, iguanas, and Galapagos tortoises. Inside, visitors can enjoy the stained glass windows and designs representing Biblical scenes with Latin inscriptions. This is a mystical place where faith, history, and colors come together to captivate locals and visitors.

### **Colonial Center**

Quito was declared by the United Nations as a Cultural Patrimony of Mankind. This city offers visitors all they can imagine in an incomparable valley setting surrounded by the Andes! You will certainly enjoy exploring the vibrant heritage of this city. Many consider Quito to have the best-preserved colonial center in the world, which is depicted by striking colonial architecture, narrow cobblestone streets, government buildings, monuments, and an impressive history. Some highlights include a visit to La Basilica, the Presidential Palace, the church of "La Compania" all historic landmarks that make Quito today one of the most beautiful cities in Latin America.

### **Quito at Night: La Ronda**

Many visitors that have the opportunity to spend time in Quito find that this is a city with a vibrant character when the sun goes to bed. To enjoy a taste of Quito's nightlife, its food and music, what better place to visit than La Ronda, a beautiful cobblestone street in the Historic Center of the city? La Ronda is said to be one of the oldest streets in Quito and has been beautifully restored accommodating several restaurants and venues for entertainment that capture the essence of local traditions and flavor. Here, on any given night, you will find locals and visitors walking in a delightful “Noche Quitena” (A night encompassing the

flavor of Quito), enjoying music, food, dancing, and an atmosphere that brings visitors to a not quite forgotten era of this colonial city. On this particular occasion, we will make our way to Colonial Quito, where colorful lights adorn buildings, cathedrals, and plazas. To start the evening we head to La Ronda, a beautiful street in the Historic Center of the city. It is said to be one of the oldest streets in Quito (if not the first) and has been nicely restored with welcoming restaurants and venues for entertainment that captures the essence of local traditions and flavor.

### **Chapel of Mankind - Guayasamin**

A visit to the Chapel of Mankind is a must when you travel to Quito. Famous artist Oswaldo Guayasamin (1919 -1999) dedicated his life to painting, sculpting, and collecting art. The museum displays his private collection of more than 7,000 artifacts including 4,500 pre-Colombian ceramic, bone and metal pieces found throughout Ecuador. His work on human and social inequalities achieved international recognition and you will have the opportunity to come face-to-face with one of the most prolific artists on the continent.

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