

# FAQ

## *International Service Trips*

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### **WHEN AND WHERE ARE THE TRIPS?**

The Agapé Center will be sending out a service trip team to the following locations:

- Bolivia (Spring Break, March 10-19)
- Northern Ireland (Spring Break, March 10-19)
- Nicaragua (May Term, May 20-27)

### **HOW MUCH DO TRIPS COST?**

The trips are funded entirely through fundraising efforts. The teams will all fundraise together by sending individual support letters and planning three different fundraising events. For both of these fundraising activities, students will work alongside the Agape Center for materials and support. In addition, the Agape Center will reach out to donors on your team's behalf. On average, the trips cost \$30,000, but this amount includes every expense for the ENTIRE team, including transportation (flights and on the ground travel), food, housing, and project costs. Our philosophy on fundraising is for the team to use their individuality (strengths and personal donor community) to contribute to the whole team efforts, working together as a group to fundraise and prepare.

### **WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR TEAM MEMBERS?**

Students are asked to set aside 1-4 hours per week, on average. Some weeks there will be more to do (i.e., the weeks leading up to a fundraising event). During the fall, there are various meetings for orientation, health information, and a letter stuffing party for fundraising letters. During the spring, students are required to attend the first and second wave of a chapel series, specifically designed for the teams, to prepare and learn more about the trip and service-learning.

### **WHAT DOES A "SERVICE-LEARNING" TRIP ENTAIL?**

A service-learning trip is similar to a mission trip in the sense that students will work to serve the community they are traveling to. The Agape Center also follows best practices by partnering with local organizations to work alongside of them and continue the work that they are already doing. This is considered "best practice" because the organizations provide a continuing foundation for the community and people. In addition to service, these trips also incorporate a learning component through preparation and reflection. During preparation, students will learn about fundraising, pros/cons of missions, an element of self-awareness, and about the country and organization they will serve with. Throughout trip preparation, as well as during and after the trip, students will gather as a team to spend time reflecting on what they are doing and learning.

### **IS THIS TRIP A CROSS CULTURAL? WILL IT COUNT FOR CREDIT?**

These trips are service-learning trips (see question above), not cross-cultural trips, and the service-learning trips do not count for credit. If you are interested in a cross-cultural trip, they take place over January Term or May Term and are led by a Messiah College faculty member. They are 3 credits and include a variety of locations. For more information, contact [intercultural@messiah.edu](mailto:intercultural@messiah.edu).