

K-12 Professional Development Abroad: Building Bridges Across Disciplines and Cultures



Teacher Summer Institute Belize

Mandy Monroe

University of Florida Center for Latin American Studies

16 October 2014

FFLA Conference

06/13/

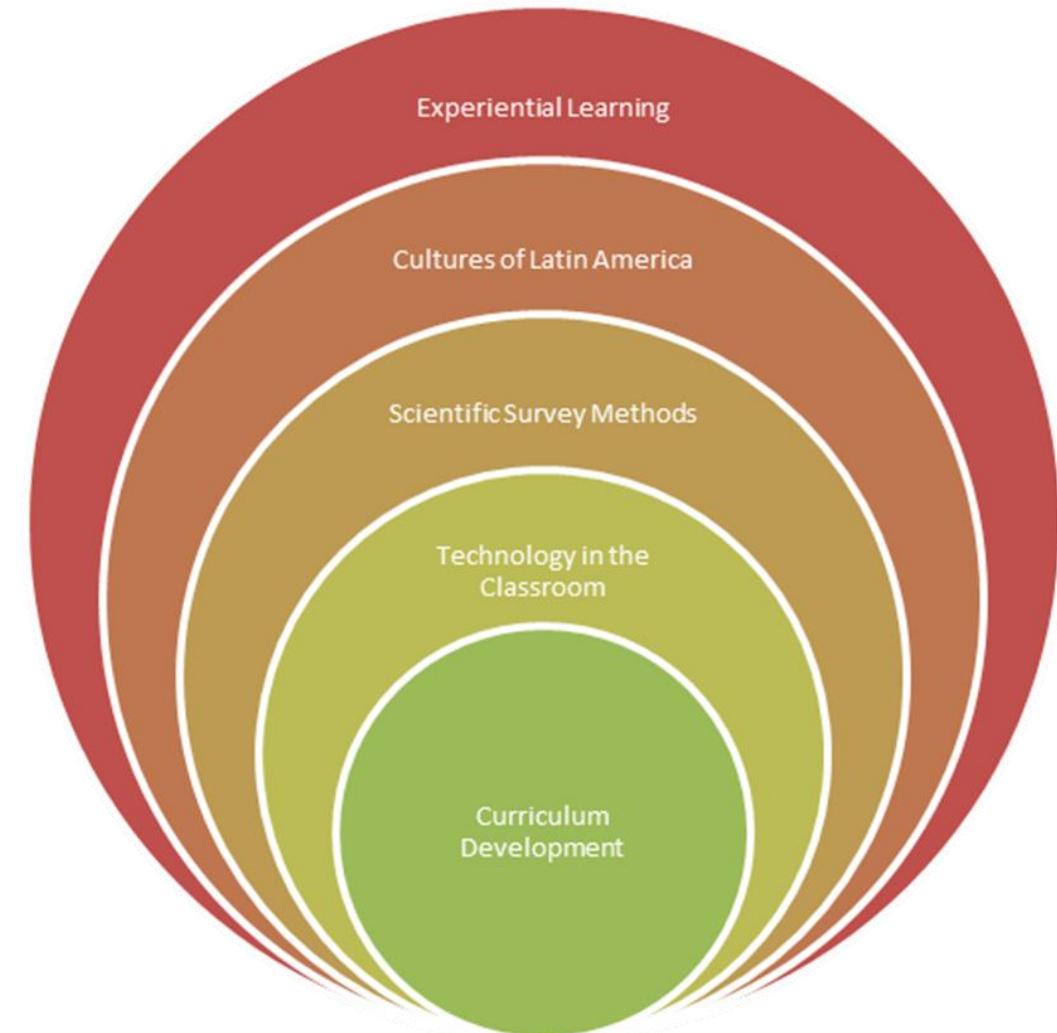
Overview

- Latin America and the Sciences
- Institute History & Framework
- 2014 Case Study
 - Why Belize? Why BFREE?
 - Technology to Prepare
 - Activities in Country
 - Reflection & Plans for Classroom Integration
 - Post Trip Outputs
- Where do we go from here?



Latin America and the Sciences

- Environmental Science Content & Curricula Development
- Latin American Ecosystems & Culture Content
- Technology & Experiential Learning in the Field & Classroom
- Intercultural Competence in Professional & Personal Interactions



Gainesville based Institute in 2011 using an online wikispace, field trips and classroom lectures to connect Latin American studies and the sciences.

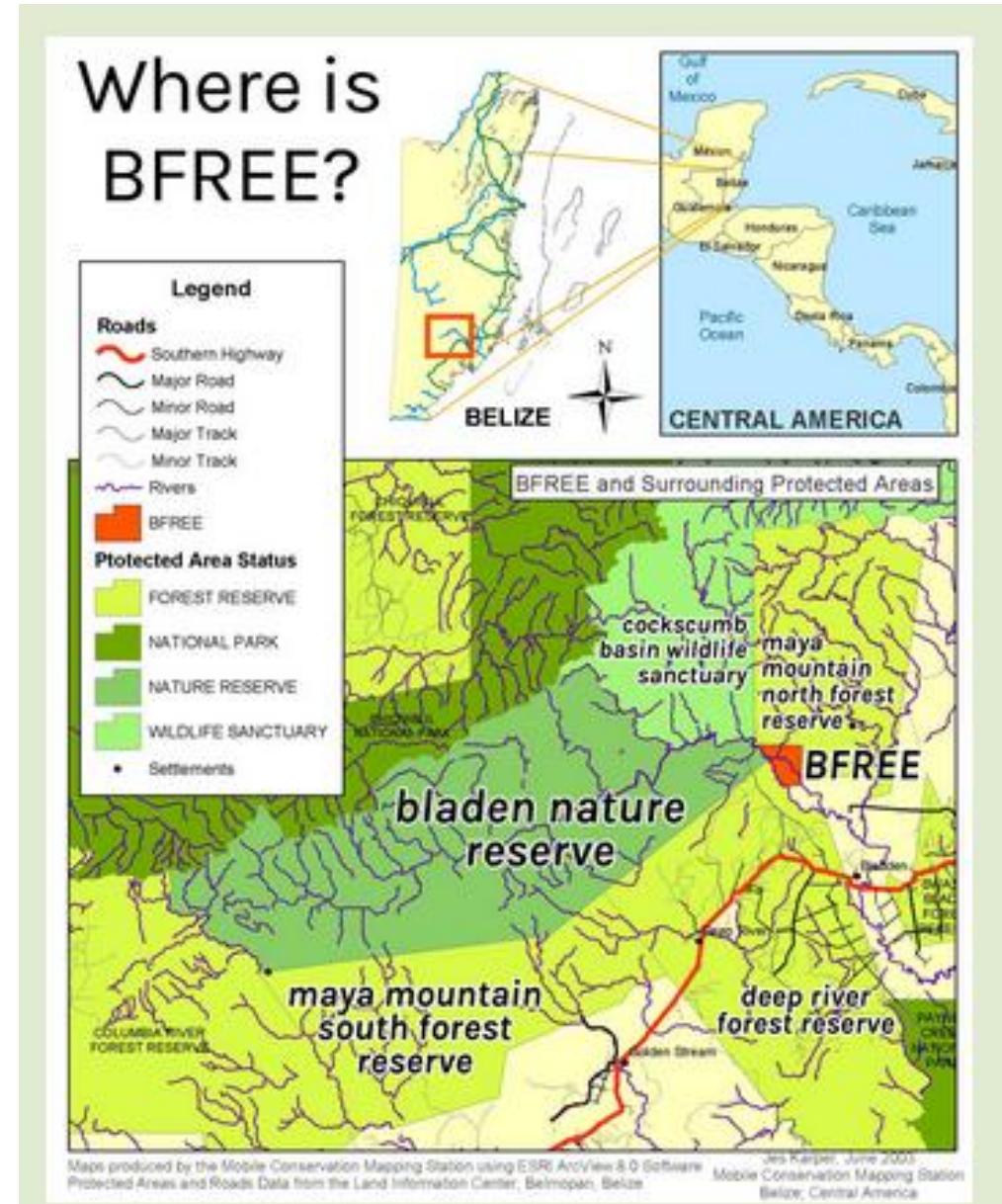
The screenshot shows the homepage of the Latin American Ecosystems wiki. The header includes a logo for the Center for Latin American Studies, the title "Latin American Ecosystems", and a search bar. The left sidebar contains links for Wiki Home, Projects, Recent Changes, Pages and Files, Members, Discussion, and Settings. The main content area features several images: a large tree trunk, a river scene with a boat, a close-up of a frog, a sunset over water, a snake on the ground, and a map of Central America. The footer includes the University of Florida logo and links for About the Wiki Series and Belize Teacher Summer Institute.



The institute integrated science and Latin American studies to develop appropriate technology and experiential learning lessons in the classroom.

2014: Why Belize? Why BFREE?

- Density of Biocultural Diversity!
 - Ecosystem richness
 - Subtropical Rainforests, Coastal Mangroves, Barrier Reef
 - Land Preservation
 - Cultural richness
 - Ethnic Diversity: Creole, Mestizo, Maya, Garifuna, Mennonite, European
 - Linguistic Diversity: English; Spanish; Creole; Garifuna; Mopan, Ke'kchi, and Yucatec Maya; German
 - Flora & Fauna richness
 - >500 bird species
 - >700 butterfly species
 - >180 species amphibians & reptiles
 - Healthy mammal populations



Self-Identified Participant Goals

- = Environmental Science Content & Curricula Development
- = Latin American Ecosystems & Culture Content
- = Technology & Experiential Learning in the Field & Classroom
- = Intercultural Competence in Professional & Personal Interactions

2014 Teacher Summer Institute Belize Pre-Trip Survey

Q5 List three areas you hope to learn about to improve learning outcomes in your classroom.

Answered: 6 Skipped: 1

#	Responses	Date
1	environmental issues another culture foods	6/20/2014 9:19 AM
2	1. I would like to learn some advanced research techniques. 2. I would like to make connections with other teachers to compare ideas. 3. I would like to come back with stories that will make my class more exciting.	6/18/2014 8:32 PM
3	Belize culture, rain forests and ecosystems, and traditions native to Belize.	6/16/2014 9:51 PM
4	1. rainforest biodiversity 2. culture 3. the diverse life in coral reefs	6/15/2014 9:27 PM
5	The effects of extractive activities on Flora and fauna Indigenous people (along with info on Mayan history, architecture, culture) And the environment (air and water quality)	6/13/2014 8:46 PM
6	Ecosystems, sustainability issues and strategies, diversity of Mayan culture	6/13/2014 3:18 PM

Websites, wikispaces, virtual connects and other online technology interfaces help to prepare teachers for their summer institute experience.

www.latam.ufl.edu/teacher-summer-institute-belize

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Teacher Summer Institute Belize

JUNE 22-29, 2014

RAINFORESTS OF LATIN AMERICA – Belize is your Classroom

Shake up your professional development experience with the ultimate HANDS-ON learning experience in the field! Teacher Summer Institute 2014 content will address the rainforests of Latin America by making connections between the broad themes of Belizean ecosystems and specific topics such as plant, animal and human interaction within the systems. The Institute is designed for and open to educators of all disciplines and grade levels, as well as pre-service teachers.



Interdisciplinary Activities Include:

- Tour the [Belize Zoo](#) and Tropical Education Center with conservationist Sharon Matola
- Interact with the Maya Center Women's Cooperative
- Learn about Medicinal Plants
- Try traditional Mayan Lunch
- Hike through diverse Ecosystems in the Bladen Reserve at [BFREE](#)
- Identify and Net Birds
- Learn about the BFREE [Harpy Eagle Project](#)
- Explore the nightlife on [Walks](#), netting Bats, and catching Wildlife on Camera
- Study River Health at BFREE
- Tour a Cacao & Coffee Agroforestry Farm
- Stay Overnight with a Maya Family in Golden Stream Community
- Snorkel in the Belize Barrier Reef
- Discover Coastal Ecosystems with [Southern Environmental Association](#)
- Enjoy Garifuna Drumming and Dance [Performance](#)

teacherinstitutebelize2014.wikispaces.com

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Welcome to the Belize Teacher Institute Wiki!

JUNE 22-29, 2014

RAINFORESTS OF LATIN AMERICA - Belize is your Classroom

 Arrival to Belize City Airport - Jun 22 2014
marymsb Apr 22, 2014
Your classroom has been created. Take a look around to see what you can do with projects and events.
 HallieSavageMartinez Apr 22, 2014
Great!
 kristenscott3 Apr 23, 2014
Hi Hallie and everyone, Very busy at work, but I'll book my flight and get back to you all.
 patgewart Apr 24, 2014
Hi everybody! I look forward to meeting you! Pat
 nvhaden May 6, 2014
Hi, Everyone! Hallie, Kristen, and I will be arriving at the Belize City Airport on United flight 1410, at 2:54 p.m. We're so excited!
 jcptak Jun 22, 2014
Missed flight. On standby. Not sure when I will be in Belize.

Home pages changes

All Pages home Itinerary Orientation Materials Participants Post-Trip Possibilities Questions and Concerns edit navigation

Activities ranging from a lecture at an artisan cooperative, snorkeling at a national park, cacao agroforestry tours, wildlife viewing, tour and lecture at the Belize Zoo and birding...



...offered participants experiential learning opportunities.

An overnight homestay in a local Maya village left lasting impressions.



Several participants reflected on the homestay in Golden Stream Community as an eye-opening experience that they will carry with them in their personal and professional lives.

A luncheon with Belizean teachers allowed educators to express their unique challenges cross culturally and to build partnerships around their aspirations.



Institute participants are eager to send books, field guides, and digital resources for the Belizean teachers who expressed a desire for classroom enrichment materials.

“learning is regarded as socially situated in that individuals **form a community for a common purpose**... it forms as members come together for a particular purpose and when that purpose no longer exists, the members disperse.” Gleeson and Tait (2012)



“while students tend to focus on learning as a means of acquiring more knowledge, teachers are more often engaging in new knowledge with the view of later transforming this into learning opportunities for their own students.” Wenicke (2010)

Cultural exchange experience encouraged teachers to innovate in their classrooms.

What three moments/experiences had the most impact on you during this summer institute?

1. BFREE - all of the tours & facilities
2. home visit
3. being engrossed into a different cultures all within Belize.

How will you use what you learned in this summer institute to improve teaching in your classroom?

I took a lot of photographs, so I'm going to share w/ students, faculty, and staff and discuss what I learned and experienced in Belize and hope to spark future visits and partnerships b/w between US & Belize such as sharing of materials on the country, environment, culture, etc.

Did the summer institute reinforce content or apply to standards you teach in the classroom? If so, explain. If not, explain why not.

Yes. I can use the things I have learned for science & environmental lessons, and understanding cultures different from our own.

What three moments/experiences had the most impact on you during th

1. Snorkeling
2. Mayan village visit
3. Belize Zoo

What three moments/experiences had the most impact on you during this summer institute?

1. BNR hike
2. Belize Zoo/Shavons talk
3. Maya home stay (both good + bad)

How will you use what you learned in this summer institute to improve teaching in your classroom?

I will be able to approach both research & environmental education with additional approaches/experiences. I will make sure to incorporate the cultural & economic impacts to environmental preservation.

Did this experience change your views about your own culture?

Definitely! I've read and viewed a lot about other cultures; however, I think that traveling to a country in person really opens your eyes as to how people live. Although poverty is rampant in many areas, I felt that most people were happy. In addition, I was surprised to hear how many adults viewed education, which was great to hear!

Did the summer institute reinforce content or apply to standards you teach in the classroom? If so, explain. If not, explain why not.

Yes the summer institute reinforced content, especially Science/Social Studies, but can also be used in Reading and Math classes. Some suggestions by the other teachers and from Mandy were very helpful.

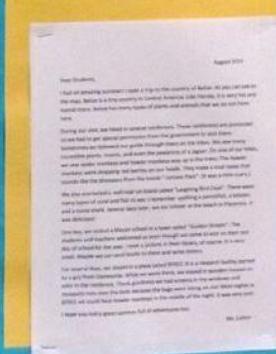
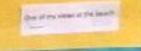
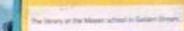
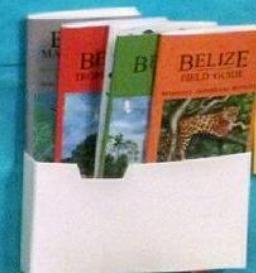
All participants mention **culture** and **science** as highlights of their trip to bring to the USA.

Post-Trip Outputs

MY SUMMER VACATION



Belize

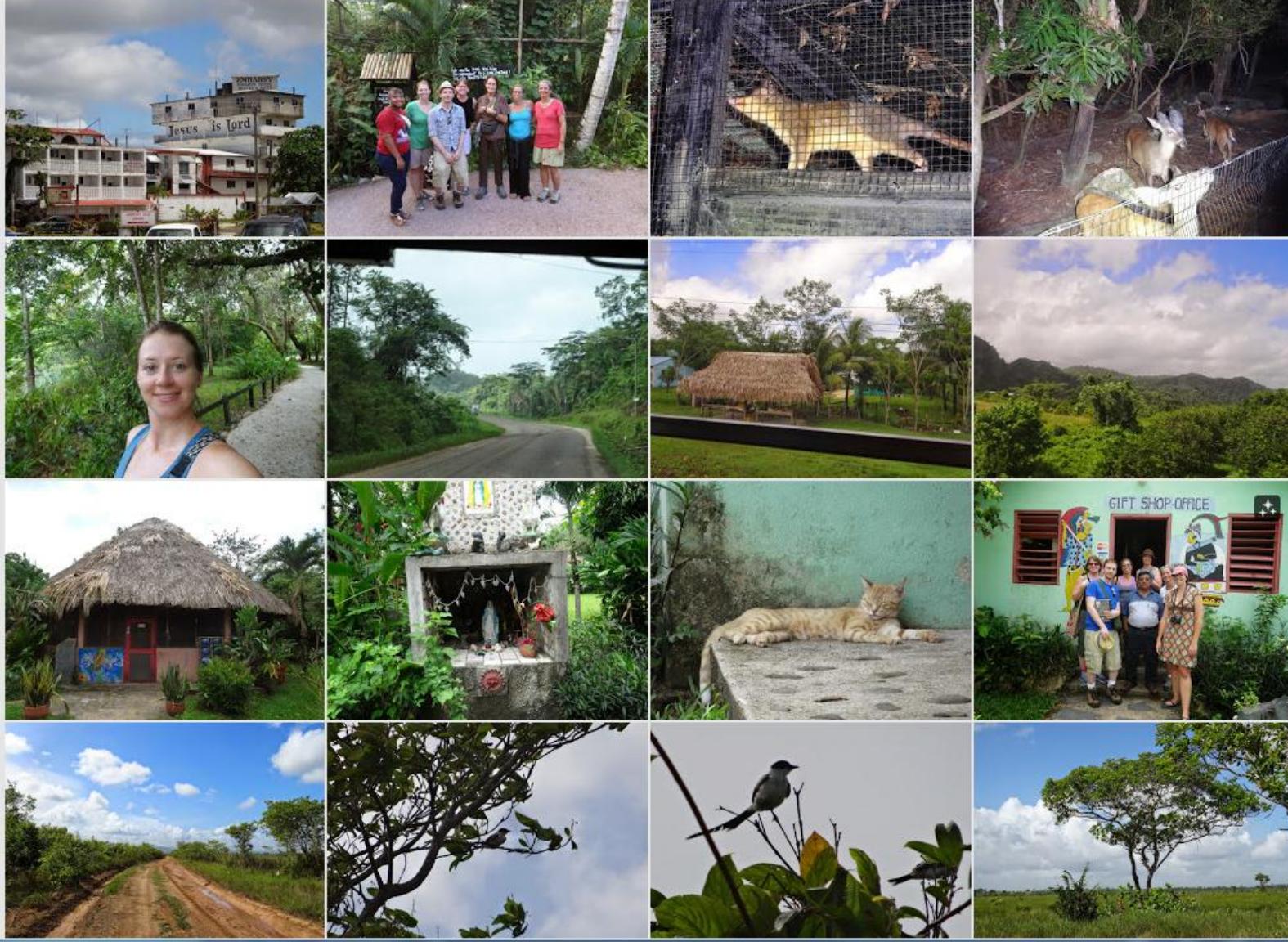


Post-Trip Outputs

← → C <https://plus.google.com/u/2/photos>  

Highlights All photos More Upload photos Tag people Share Jun 2014

2014-07-01
195 photos · Jun 22-24, 2014



Post-Trip Outputs

www.tripline.net/trip/Belize_-07417630555210078178A245004C2FB7

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an adventure by Jason Pitak

2014 Summer Teacher Institute Program: Ecosystems of Belize

A map of North America and Central America. A red line with numbered stops (1, 2, 14) indicates the travel route. Stop 1 is in Chicago, IL, USA. Stop 2 is in Mexico. Stop 14 is in Belize. The map also shows the Great Lakes, the Mississippi River, and various countries like Canada, Mexico, and Central American nations.

Map | Satellite

Google

BETA

June 22-July3

15 places | 2,097 miles (3.375 km) | visibility: public | created 2 months ago | 97 views | 0 followers | 0 copies
google earth: [export kml](#) or [view inline](#) | [print view](#)

g+ 0 Twitter 0 Like 0 Share 0

EMBED COMMENT

Sunday, June 22, 2014

1 Chicago, IL, USA (5:00 am)
A few pictures of my gear and backpack.

Travelers

Jason Pitak
Chicago, IL, USA

Main Location

Belize
Country | 2 followers

Where do we go from here?



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Outreach Services

Services

- o Web Resources
- o Traveling Suitcases

Outreach Lending Library

The Outreach Program maintained a collection of more than 500 resources on Latin American and Caribbean topics in our Lending Library. As of summer 2014, the program merged our collection of videos with that of Tulane University. We believe this merge to be a contribution to the larger Latin American Studies community: we are certain that our videos in their new home will gain exposure with a wider audience.

The majority of the titles previously available through our Outreach Lending Library are now available through the [Roger Thayer Stone Center for Latin American Studies](#). We encourage educators to browse the Stone Center's resource materials and lending procedures on their webpage linked above.

Traveling Suitcases

Traveling Suitcases are artifact collections reflecting thematic areas of the diverse cultures, traditions and economies of Latin America. Educators may borrow these suitcases at no charge (though they are responsible for the cost of return shipping). These unique collections of books, toys, music, product packaging, currency, national symbols, and other items have been collected by UF faculty, students, and friends while traveling in Latin America. Many teachers use them as a learning center, letting students handle items and discuss their uses. Please see the Traveling Suitcases tab on the left for more information.

Webinars

Webinars provide an online classroom in which professionals can gain further knowledge on a variety of topics related to Latin America. To participate in our current webinar series, "Preparing Students for the Global Workplace," please visit the Network of Business Language Educators (NOBLE) [website](#).

Workshops

Workshops are held in a variety of locations for teachers who want to incorporate Latin American Studies into their curriculum. The workshops typically feature presentations given by UF faculty or graduate students from disciplines such as anthropology, political science, history, music, sociology, wildlife science, botany, and others. Participants include K-12 teachers as well as community college instructors. The program also offers workshops for teachers in cooperation with school districts.

Speakers Bureau

University of Florida faculty and graduate students offer presentations on Latin America and the Caribbean to



References

- Gleeson, M., & Tait, C. (2012). Teachers as sojourners: Transitory communities in short study-abroad programmes. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28(8), 1144-1151.
doi:10.1016/j.tate.2012.07.005
- Wernicke, M. (2010). Study abroad as professional development for FSL teachers. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics/Revue Canadienne De Linguistique Appliquée*, 13(1), 4-18.
- Photo Credits: from the Belize Teachers Google+ Photo share





Thank you!