

Office of Active Citizenship and Service  
 Student Driven | Community Centered

### Global Service Programs

# 2015

London, South Africa, Morocco, Ecuador

# 2016

Student Participants

38

Nichols Fund Recipients

18

Hours Served

5,096

Preparatory Seminars

28

82% Feel "Personally Transformed" by the Experience

82%

89% Feel "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the Program

89%

[www.vanderbilt.edu/oacs](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/oacs)



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## Executive Summary

The OACS Global Service Programs challenge students to critically question their perspectives and roles in the shared human experience through pre-service curriculum, intensive service, post-service skills application, and continuous reflection. These programs are rooted in service-learning pedagogy and are meticulously planned in order to best facilitate students' abilities to connect meaningfully with people different from themselves through humble engagement and reciprocal dialogues within host communities. Participants bring this learning back to add positive value and depth to the social fabric of the Vanderbilt community and Nashville.

## Recommendations

- In the site leader's manual include a step-by-step, suggested daily task list for week 1 in country. This year the site leaders struggled specifically with finding a bank which would accept the Vanderbilt ONE card for cash withdrawals. Banco de Guayaquil should be recommended for all future site leaders.
- Connect all weekend excursions with a community service project, grassroots NGO visit, and/or lecture by a cultural expert. Weekend excursions are important for the mental and emotional health of students following a week of intensive work at their sites. However, trips should be less touristy and more oriented towards the overall mission of cultural engagement and exchange.
- Optional Spanish courses should be established in the afternoons after the students have finished working at their sites.
- There must be at least two volunteers at Abuelitos de la Calle in order for students to be placed there. Students volunteering at Abuelitos must be matched for the specific needs of this site.
- Yanapuma needs to provide OACS with a detailed itinerary covering all weekend excursions in order for the site leaders to review and ask questions beforehand. Students should be provided with this information in their manuals.
- Students should be informed of their service site placement three months in advance. Communication with their site should be established through Yanapuma well before arrival.
- Select seminar dates in the fall and inform all applicants of mandatory attendance. Do not wait for student input on date and time. Efforts to accommodate all schedules resulted in rescheduled seminars and delayed communication in 2016.

## Learning Outcomes

- Develop interpersonal skills in conflict resolution and group decision-making
- Analyze the role of international service in the context of identifying and challenging systemic barriers to equality and inclusiveness
- Encourage critical thinking through examining deep-rooted issues related to equity and justice
- Develop the ability to serve the needs of others through intentional observation and active listening to a community's self-identified needs
- Recognize ones own potential to affect meaningful community change while maintaining a humble appreciation of the challenges of impact
- Develop a strategic action plan for personal and professional development that demonstrates a commitment to human dignity and global citizenship through synthesizing knowledge obtained throughout the service learning experience
- Understand and value diverse backgrounds and perspectives
- Critically reflect on the interconnectedness of communities worldwide through challenging assumptions and considering alternative perspectives

Program Cohort Breakdown		
Program	# of Program Participants	# of Survey Respondents
Ecuador	8	6*

\*Three students only completed portions of the pre and post surveys

### Methodology

To properly assess learning outcomes, pre- and post-experience assessment instruments were created through Baseline to efficiently gather qualitative and quantitative data. OACS staff designed these instruments, composed of Likert scale and free response questions, and distributed them in February, 2016 and July, 2016. Students responded to the pre survey before they attended a seminar and to the post survey after their program concluded. The method of data analysis required individuals' pre and post responses to be compared to one another in order to measure growth, if any. However, because not all students completed both pre and post surveys (some completed one but not the other), responders who only completed one survey were not included in the measurement of learning outcomes. Students were instructed as to the importance of these surveys and asked to respond as accurately as possible, in a timely fashion. They were informed

that their responses would be anonymous in order to facilitate honesty. From a methodological perspective, web-based surveys were utilized rather than paper surveys in order to maximize the response rate and facilitate the means by which students could answer. This also eliminated the need for manual input of assessment data. The surveys took approximately 30 minutes to complete.

## Results - Program Satisfaction

Students responded during the post-experience survey to questions measuring their satisfaction with specific program components and with their overall experiences. These questions employed either a Likert scale or yes/no response.

*1. Do you feel you were personally transformed by the impact the OACS Ecuador Program made on your life?*



*2. Please indicate your overall level of satisfaction with the OACS Ecuador Program*



## Student Recommendations

The following are student responses from the post experience survey question “*What were some of the worst aspects of the OACS Ecuador Program?*”

- It was too short. If OACS doesn't want to make the program five weeks, I would at least extend it by a weekend to get in one more weekend trip
- I would recommend choosing a work site where at least one other cohort member is working as well. That way, the students have people to explore the area with after work
- It wasn't super clear to us what we would be doing on the weekend trips before we went to Ecuador. Some of the activities we did, like hiking in the jungle, were very physically difficult, and I would've appreciated more warning before the trip so I could've prepared better for that

3. Please indicate your overall level of satisfaction with the spring seminar series

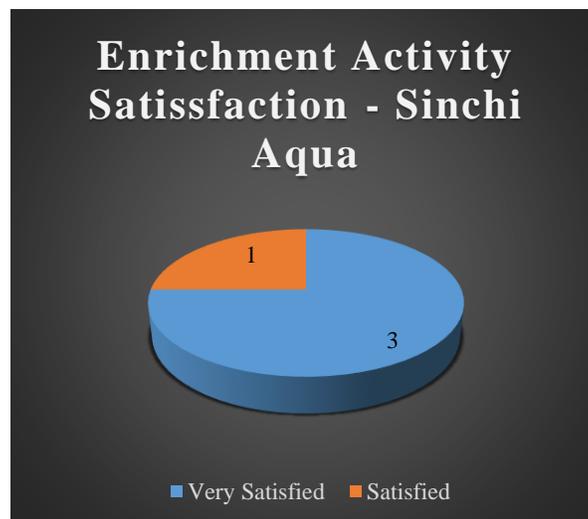
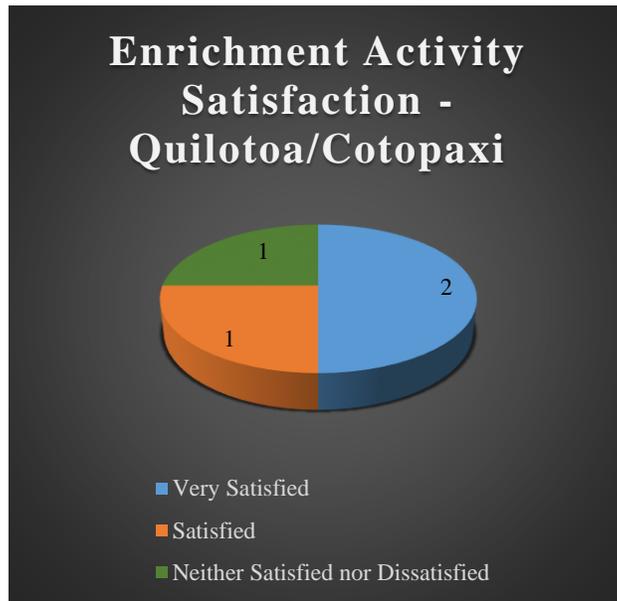


## Student Recommendations

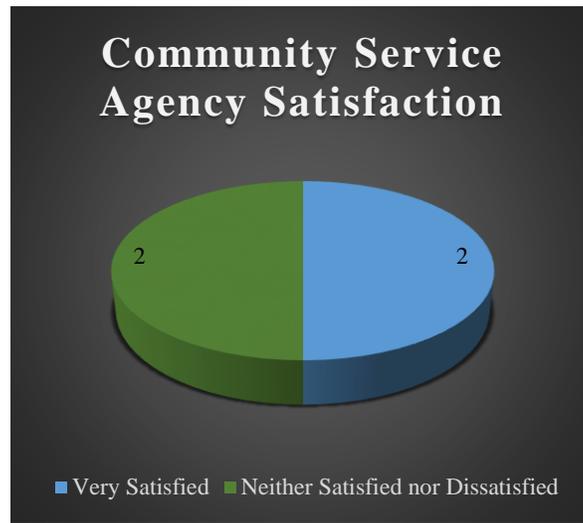
The following are student responses from the post experience survey question “*What are 1-2 ways the spring seminar series could be improved for future program participants?*”

- I felt like the pre-trip seminars could've been organized/communicated better. Sometimes we would be told about a meeting the day before and assigned lots of reading, which I honestly wanted to do but just didn't have time
- I think there should be an extra bonding experience, which could take the form of another service day or a day with team-building activities
- My biggest complaint about the seminars is that many of them were during other club meetings, but this is inevitable

4. Please indicate your overall level of satisfaction with the enrichment activities provided



5. Please indicate your overall level of satisfaction of your experience with the community service agency with which you were paired



### Results – Learning Outcomes

All student responses are taken from questions utilizing a 1-5 Likert scale. Responses are assigned a numerical equivalent for the purposes of analysis and to display growth. For every response, a 1 correlates to the lowest understanding/experience/agreement/etc. and a 5 correlates to the highest level. Student responses are then averaged to show how they progressed as a cohort, per learning outcome.

1. Develop interpersonal skills in conflict resolution and group decision-making.

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Please indicate the extent to which you have experience with the following: - <b>Working through a difficult relationship with a group/team member</b>	4	3.83	-.17
Please indicate the extent to which you have experience with the following: - <b>Partaking in consensus decision-making</b>	4.17	4	-.17
Please indicate the extent to which you have experience with the following: - <b>Working cooperatively with others</b>	4.5	4.5	0

2. Analyze the role of international service in the context of identifying and challenging systemic barriers to equality and inclusiveness.

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - <i>I understand the complexities of service in international contexts</i>	3.6	4.2	.6
Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - <i>I can identify systemic barriers to equality</i>	3.4	4.2	.8
Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - <i>I can identify systemic barriers to equity</i>	3.4	4.2	.8
Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - <i>I can identify systemic barriers to inclusiveness</i>	3.8	4.4	.6

3. Encourage critical thinking through examining deep-rooted issues related to equity and justice.

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Please indicate the extent to which you understand the following: - <i>Social/cultural issues relating to social justice and equity</i>	3.6	3.8	.2
Please indicate the extent to which you understand the following: - <i>Issues of equity and justice that impact my life</i>	3.4	4	.6
Please indicate the extent to which you understand the following: - <i>Issues of equity and justice that impact the lives of others</i>	3.6	3.8	.2

4. Develop the ability to serve the needs of others through intentional observation and active listening to a community's self-identified needs.

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Please indicate the degree of importance of the following actions when initiating a service activity with community partners: - <i>Take time to observe before acting</i>	5	4.67	-.33

Please indicate the degree of importance of the following actions when initiating a service activity with community partners: - <b>Actively listen</b>	5	5	0
Please indicate the degree of importance of the following actions when initiating a service activity with community partners: - <b>Take time to understand the context of the issues the community faces</b>	4.8	4.83	.03

5. *Recognize ones own potential to affect meaningful community change while maintaining a humble appreciation of the challenges of impact*

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - <b>I understand the positive outcomes of service</b>	4.2	4.4	.2
Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - <b>I understand the negative outcomes of service</b>	3.2	4.6	1.4
Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - <b>I understand the limitations of the impact of this international service project</b>	4	4.8	.8
Do you feel like you are able to act on your knowledge to affect positive community change?	Yes = 3 Respondents No = 2 Respondent	Yes = 5 Respondents	+2 Respondents

6. *Develop a strategic action plan for personal and professional development that demonstrates a commitment to human dignity and global citizenship through synthesizing knowledge obtained throughout the service learning experience.*

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Pre-Survey Question: Do you feel you have opportunities to practice global citizenship?	Yes = 4 Respondents No = 0 Respondents	Yes = 2 Respondents No = 0 Respondents	0
Pre-Survey Question: Do you actively apply notions of social justice and global citizenship to your personal and professional development?	Yes = 4 Respondents No = 0 Respondents	Yes = 2 Respondents No = 0 Respondents	0

## 7. Understand and value diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements: - <b><i>I can compare and contrast an alternate belief system with my own</i></b>	4.17	4.5	.33
Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following: - <b><i>Many of my friends are of different backgrounds from me (racial, cultural, ethnic, or language)</i></b>	3.83	3.67	-.16
Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following: - <b><i>I have developed an understanding of another country and its cultures</i></b>	4	4.5	.5
Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following: - <b><i>I value diversity</i></b>	4.83	5	.17

## 8. Critically reflect on the interconnectedness of communities worldwide through challenging assumptions and considering alternative perspectives

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - <b><i>I see the world as interconnected</i></b>	4	4.6	.6
Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - <b><i>I am very comfortable talking about diversity with people of different cultures</i></b>	4	4	0
Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - <b><i>I am able to navigate a culture different from my own</i></b>	4	4.5	.5

## 9. Increase proficiency in the Spanish language

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Please choose the option that best describes your current level of Spanish reading ability	2 Beginner 2 Intermediate 1 Advanced	1 Beginner 1 Intermediate 2 Advanced	N/A
How comfortable are you communicating with Spanish speakers?	2 uncomfortable 2 comfortable	1 uncomfortable 2 comfortable	N/A

10. Evaluate in-depth reflection by evaluating the meaning-making filter through which one's contextual influences are filtered, revealing the lived experience of the self as a cultural being

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Please indicate how well you are able to evaluate the following: - <i>How my identify affects the ways in which I understand the identities and lived experiences of others</i>	3.8	4.33	.53

11. Be able to identify local, sustainable practices and grassroots models in healthcare, education, and environmental conservation in Ecuador

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement: - <i>I am able to identify local, sustainable practices in education and environmental conservation in Ecuador.</i>	2.8	2.33	-.47

## Learning Outcome Analysis

- **Strengths**

The Ecuador cohort showed strongest growth in learning outcomes 2 and 5, where they averaged movement of .7 and .8 across questions, respectively. The question showing largest growth (movement of 1.4) was *please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements: - I understand the negative outcomes of service.*

- **Areas for Improvement**

The Ecuador cohort was weakest in learning outcomes 1 and 4, where they averaged movement of -.11 and -.1 across questions in questions, respectively. The question showing the largest regression of growth (movement of -.47) was *indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement: - I am able to identify local, sustainable practices in education and environmental conservation in Ecuador.* However, it's important to note that only three students answered this question on both the pre and post surveys, so the data is by no means comprehensive. The Ecuador data was made more difficult to analyze by the fact that, on the pre survey, nine students responded but only six completed the entire survey. Likewise, on the post survey, seven students responded but only three completed the entire survey. These variances in completion rates could have thrown off the reliability of the data in regards to average cohort movement. When we do see regression on certain questions, it should be noted that this regression generally correlates to one respondent answering one degree less (i.e. "very well" instead of "extremely well"), which is not statistically relevant on the whole.