

Nine WCU Students Learn Spanish in Costa Rica

Every summer, **WCUSpanish** offers a faculty-led study abroad program in Costa Rica for students taking Spanish 240 who need an immersion experience that fits between semesters. This past summer, nine WCU students traveled with Garrett Fisher to Costa Rica, where they had classes at the Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica and even learned the past perfect tense on the sands of the beach in Manuel Antonio National Park. The group donated supplies to a Costa Rican elementary school and lived with host families, enjoying plenty of opportunities to practice their Spanish.

For information on how you can participate in *Pura Vida 2017*, contact [Garrett Fisher](#) in McKee 132B.



clockwise from top left:
 learning about crocodiles up close; the whole group on campus at the Instituto Tecnológico; atop the Irazú Volcano; Garrett Fisher with the director of the elementary school that accepted the supplies.

Where are you from?

I am from Gastonia, and the only place I have ever lived is North Carolina.

Where have you traveled?

I have visited China, Spain, spent a few hours in Germany, and traveled the entire east coast of the United States along with starting to move west with a few places including Texas. I LOVE to travel because it allows me to experience different cultures, try new things, visit historical places, taste different foods, and open my eyes to things beyond that to which I am accustomed.

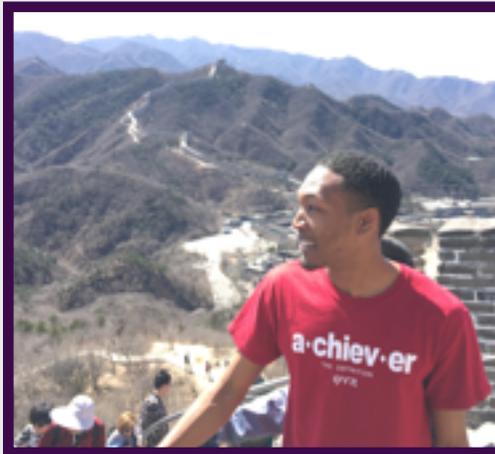
You are a Communications major, minoring in Spanish. Why did you choose this combination?

Yes, I am a communications major with a concentration in Public Relations and a minor in Spanish. I love the study of communications. Being able to speak, listen, and write effectively is key when it comes to anything in life from friendships to potential jobs. No matter what career you seek, the most sought-after skills are effective communication skills. It just so happens that what I love learning is the desirable skill needed in the work force. As far as Spanish goes, one of my life goals has always been to be able to speak another language, so I chose Spanish because of my strong interest in the Spanish culture. I love the language and the barriers I am able to break down because of my ability to be able to communicate with non-native English speakers. I also feel it is important to gain a skill needed in order to communicate with others outside of English. Spanish also makes me desirable when it comes to employment opportunities.

Tell us about your role in on-campus organizations.

I have had the honor of serving as a student leader in positions including tour guide, orientation counselor, Project C.A.R.E mentor, member of the Honors College, Deans and Chancellors list recipient, Resident Assistant, and SGA President. I have worked hard in every position, but SGA has granted me the opportunities

**STUDENT PROFILES:
BARON CRAWFORD**



for the most growth beginning as a senator working my way up to being president (four years of involvement total).

How do you spend your time when you're not doing school-related stuff?

During the little free time I have outside of school, I truly enjoy traveling and random road trips, relaxing at home while binge-watching Netflix, exercising, trying different restaurants, and spending quality time with friends and family. I also sleep a lot when I don't have anything on my agenda.

Tell us about your motivation to study Spanish.

I have always wanted to be fluent in another language. That language happens to be Spanish. I enjoy the way it sounds and how the language is spoken. My passion for Spanish has grown the more I study it and embrace the culture. I feel Spanish is relatable to who I am as a person and it gives me a challenge, but also a commonality with native Spanish speakers. It feels good being able to speak Spanish to native Spanish speakers and comes in handy for jobs. I also have friends and family who push me to learn another language.

How do you use your Spanish most now?

I use my Spanish whenever the opportunity presents itself whether it be speaking with a Spanish speaking friend or trying to order food at a Spanish restaurant. It was amazing studying abroad in Spain because I was able to use Spanish a lot more frequently. In the future I see myself using Spanish on a daily basis due to the type of work I would like to do.

Anything else?

I am in the process of trying to figure out my next steps after graduation. I haven't decided on a specific career path but I look forward to what comes after graduation. I come from a large family. I will be the first to graduate from college so Western has not only been a tremendous milestone for me but also my family, which is what gives me the motivation to do what I do on a daily basis.



#WCUenVLC2016: Experiencing Valencia, Spain

Summer 2016 saw the largest group ever for *WCU en VLC*, WCU's yearly faculty-led study abroad program in Valencia, Spain. Fifteen WCU students lived with host families in Mislata, just outside the Valencia city limits, where they studied advanced Spanish grammar and Spanish culture. The students visited castles, cathedrals, and museums with their professors but did plenty of exploring on their own, from rural villages to sunny Mediterranean beaches. For information about how to participate in next summer's program, contact [Alberto Centeno-Pulido](#) or [Lori Oxford](#).

from top:

in front of L'Hemisfèric, part of the City of Arts and Sciences, an architectural complex in Valencia; fighting the heat the traditional Spanish way; overlooking the town of Xàtiva on their way to the castle above.



Dr. Santiago García-Castañón represented WCU at not one, but *two* international events this summer:

- In June he gave a poetry reading at the Centro Asturiano in Geneva, Switzerland.
- In August he participated in an international conference on "Representaciones literarias de la comida y los alimentos" at the Universidad de Costa Rica, where he presented his paper "La función de la comida y la bebida en *Lazarillo de Tormes*."

New for Fall 2016: Latina/o Studies

Looking for a program to complement your study of Spanish? Still haven't decided on that second major or minor that's required for the Spanish B.A.? You can now complete an approved program in Latina/o Studies, a new multidisciplinary look at the cultures and experiences of people of Hispanic ancestry in the USA. The program requires 18 credit hours (six standard courses) that can be tailored to your interests from a list of courses in English, Geography, History, Spanish, or other disciplines that offer courses relevant to Latina/o Studies.

To get started with this exciting new program, contact **Dr. Melissa Birkhofer** in the English Department or **Dr. Lori Oxford** in World Languages.

Stay tuned for updates on two WCUSpanish alumni who will be working this academic year in Spain: **Ashleigh Gay** and **Ian Jeffreys** are [North American Language and Culture Assistants](#) with the Spanish Ministry of Education. Ashleigh is headed to Garrucha in southern Spain, while Ian will be living and working in Portocolom in the Balearic Islands.

(Check out the link above to see if this opportunity is right for you after you graduate!)

Josefina Niggli Latina/o Speakers Series:

Fernando Campos

Want to learn more about opportunities and obstacles for North Carolina Latina/o students applying to college? Come hear Fernando Campos, an ESL Community Liaison with Durham, NC Public Schools on Thursday, September 15 at 5:30 in the Niggli Theatre. For more info, contact [Dr. Melissa Birkhofer](#).

(Don't worry, this event will end in plenty of time for you to also hear Tim Wise, the anti-racism speaker scheduled at 7:00 that night in the UC.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

WCUSPANISH

COME PRACTICE AT *TERTULIA*

Anyone in the WCU community is welcome to come practice speaking Spanish with us at our weekly conversation hour at Tuck's Tap & Grille, at 5pm every week:

- **Thursday, Sept. 8**
- **Tuesday, Sept. 13**
- **Monday, Sept. 19**
- **Tuesday, Sept. 29**
- **Monday, Oct. 3**
- **Tuesday, Oct. 11**

FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD OFFERINGS:

- **Buenos Aires, Argentina over winter break 2016-2017:** Medical Spanish OR Argentinean History and Culture (the two programs cannot be combined). Each program will allow students to earn three credit hours in Spanish. The Medical Spanish program also includes 20 hours of shadowing medical professionals with distinct specialties. December 26, 2016 to January 8, 2017. Contact [Dr. Alberto Centeno-Pulido](#).
- **Cartago, Costa Rica over summer 2017:** Six credit hours for SPAN 240, Accelerated Intermediate Spanish. Contact [Garrett Fisher](#).
- **Valencia, Spain over summer 2017:** Six credit hours for SPAN 394, Advanced Grammar and Valencian History and Culture. Contact [Dr. Alberto Centeno-Pulido](#) or [Dr. Lori Oxford](#).

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 Do you know a student in the Spanish program or an alumnus/alumna with an interesting story? Is there an event of interest to Spanish study that we should announce here? Let us know! Contact the [Spanish Program coordinator](#) with your news.  
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 on the [WCU Spanish program's webpage](#).

¡Muchas gracias!