

Mayan Medical Aid Student Scholarship

FAQ

Application Form

Question 1:

Who can certify financial need and enrollment?

Answer 1:

The Dean or any representative of the Dean's office who has the knowledge and authority. On the application, students supply the email addresses of such persons. Then, we make the contact and obtain the certification.

Question 2:

What if my dates cannot be cast in stone at the time of the filing the application?

Answer 2:

Tentative dates are fine. We understand that schedules change, and we work with students to accommodate them.

Question 3:

When do I need to file the application?

Answer 3:

It is best to file the application as soon as possible. The scholarships are provided on a first-come, first-served basis. The longer you wait, the greater the chance that the number of scholarships available will be exhausted. When you apply has no relationship as to when you can participate in the elective. Your dates of participation are your choice.

Question 4:

How and when do I make payment for the student's portion of the fees?

Answer 4:

Payment for your portion should be made as the final step in completing the application. Scholarships only can be granted if payment for the student portion of the fees is made. To make payment online, click on the following link:

<http://www.mayanmedicalaid.org/scholarship3.htm>

Question 5:

How do I know that I have been granted the scholarship before I make payment?

Answer 5:

We have 50 scholarships available, from November 1, 2007 to October 31, 2008. We will close the program once we have granted these 50 scholarships. If you have received or downloaded an application, scholarships are still available. If you are certain that your school will confirm 1) that you have applied for and received financial aid in the past and 2) that you are currently enrolled as a student, you will be granted a scholarship upon making payment.

Question 6:

How do I send the completed application back to Mayan Medical Aid?

Answer 6:

You can send it as an email, by fax, or online:

Email: craigasinkinson@aol.com

Fax: 866-606-2535

Online: http://www.mayanmedicalaid.org/form_scholappl.html

Housing

Question 1:

How do I arrange for housing?

Answer 1:

After you complete the application process and are granted the scholarship, we will talk to you about your housing preferences and try to match those with available housing.

Question 2:

Where do most other students stay?

Answer 2:

There is no usual place where students stay. Each student has preferences. Some want to stay in a hostel; some want a quiet place; some want to be where the action is; some want a kitchen; some want a hotel; and some want a house. As stated above, we try to help students find the type of housing they prefer. Just let us know. Generally, with enough advance notice, we can find you what you prefer.

Question 3:

What are my housing options and approximate costs?

Answer 3:

The options available for housing range from hostels (approx. \$7/night) to hotels (approx. \$15-80/night) to houses (approx. \$175-800/month).

Question 4:

Can I live in a home-stay situation?

Answer 4:

We cannot offer home stays. Our village is very poor and, therefore, ill-equipped to house students. We provide immersion in other ways.

Question 5:

1) Where is most housing located?

Answer 5:

Most housing is located a 15- to 20-minute walk from the Clinic. The town is located up the hill from the Lake. The housing is near the shore. Most of us walk to the village, but there is a pickup truck, which can take you up for \$3 per one-way trip.

Classes

Question 1:

When do the electives begin?

Answer 1:

The electives begin every Monday throughout the year.

Question 2:

What is the typical class schedule?

Answer 2:

The Medical Spanish program consists of 3-4 hours of didactic and 3-4 hours of clinical teaching per day. The schedule for the didactic teaching is 5 days per week. For the clinical teaching, it is 4 days per week.

Question 3:

How large are the classes?

Answer 3:

We try to keep the class size small (1-4), because we believe that it promotes better learning. The number of students present at any particular time varies according to the season: more come in the summer months.

Question 4:

Where are the classes taught?

Answer 4:

We have one location for the Medical Spanish program. It is the municipality of Santa Cruz La Laguna.

Question 5:

How does the clinical aspect of the program work?

Answer 5:

The clinical aspect of the Medical program consists of seeing patients during the half of the day, either afternoon or morning, depending on your scheduled didactic teaching. We see approximately 600-700 patients per month. What we try to do is to have students see patients on one day and then, follow-up with them in their homes the next day or two. This practice contributes to immersion, and it gives students an idea about how our patients live and understand what we have told them the day before.

Question 6:

Which challenges do you face in providing clinical care?

Answer 6:

Our population is poor and undernourished. As such, our primary challenges are malnutrition, respiratory illnesses, intestinal parasites, bacterial and viral diarrhea, poor pre-natal care, post-partum hemorrhage, a lack of education and impaired cognitive function, magical / spiritual thinking, follow-up, and illiteracy.

Question 7:

What are the benefits of the combination of clinical and didactic teaching?

Answer 7:

We have had great success with our combination of didactic and clinical teaching. As an example, we had a first-year student who was able to take a history and physical on his own - in Spanish - after three weeks of instruction and very little prior knowledge of Spanish. It is the reiterative process and practicing what you learn on real patients, which make the difference.

Question 8:

How many students can participate at the same time?

Answer 8:

We can accommodate up to six students at any given time for the Medical Spanish program and four students for the Dental Spanish program.

Question 9:

What can students do in the clinical setting?

Answer 9:

We allow students to practice to their level of competence. Most often, that means seeing patients with one of our faculty. But as students progress in their understanding of Spanish and how to take and perform a history and physical exam, we allow them to see patients on their own and then, present that patient to the faculty member. The faculty member checks the student's work and helps the student to decide on and implement appropriate therapy in the context of our village.

Question 10:

Do the classes just teach Medical Spanish or the language in general?

Answer 10:

One cannot learn just a part of a language. But our strong focus is to train physicians and dentists to communicate with their patients. As such, we concentrate on the medical and dental aspects of the language, with enough grammar tossed in to allow students to make sense of what they need to say. Although memorization is a part of learning, we want our students to be facile enough with the language to be able to know how to say what they need to say without searching their memory banks for specific phrases.

We use certain shortcuts to accomplish this goal. In addition, we have developed electronic Medical and Dental Spanish textbooks, which include interactive, electronic testing systems.

Question 11:

What if my Spanish is not very advanced?

Answer 11:

We always tailor our program to the needs of individual students. We take into account individual learns at their own level and pace.

Question 12:

Are purchasing books required for these classes?

Answer 12:

Certain books are highly recommended:

- 1) *The Physician's Guidebook to Medical Spanish, Volume 1: History, Physical / Evaluation, Diagnosis;* and
- 2) *The Physician's Guidebook to Medical Spanish, Volume 2: Treatment*

Please click on the following link for more information on these books:

http://www.medicalspanishstore.com/phys_gdbk_print.html

We recommend the purchase of this two-volume set in paper or electronic form. You will learn more having them during the elective, and they also serve as references after you return home.

Transportation

Question 1:

Is airfare included in the fees?

Answer 1:

Airfare is not included in the elective fees.

Question 2:

How is transportation to and from Santa Cruz arranged?

Answer 2:

We arrange for your roundtrip transportation from the Airport to Santa Cruz. There is a \$40 charge for this service.

Question 3:

Which is the best airline to use?

Answer 3:

Spirit is usually the least expensive, but you need to travel from a city they serve. In some cases, this means traveling from your hometown to one of the cities from which they fly. Go to their website and sign up for their specials and their newsletter:

<http://www.spiritair.com>

Other airlines include Continental, United, American, Taca, Delta, and US Airways. Often, you need to search a bit and try different parameters. For example, it costs less to fly roundtrip from Salt Lake City via Houston to Guatemala City than it does to fly round trip only from Houston to Guatemala City.

Prior Spanish-Speaking Ability

Question 1:

How well do I need to speak Spanish to participate in the elective?

Answer 1:

No prior level of Spanish-speaking ability is required. We teach you what you need to know.

About Santa Cruz

Question 1:

Where is Santa Cruz La Laguna located?

Answer 1:

Santa Cruz La Laguna is located on the North shore of the very beautiful Lake Atitlán in the highlands of Guatemala, where the weather is just about perfect all year.

Question 2:

Is Santa Cruz large or small?

Answer 2:

The municipality of Santa Cruz consists of five villages, three on the Lake and two in the mountains far away. We practice in 3 of those villages, Santa Cruz, Jaibalito, and Tzununa. Santa Cruz has a population of approximately 2000; Tzununa is 2500, and Jaibalito is 500.

Question 3:

Are there any links to maps or other information about the area?

Answer 3:

<http://www.atitlan.com/>

The link above provides pictures of the Lake. There is a map link and many other links at the bottom of the page.

The photo on this page is a view from Santa Cruz to the South of the Lake, looking at the San Lucas volcano. The water really does shimmer as it does in this animated picture.

Question 4:

What is life like in Santa Cruz?

Answer 4:

Santa Cruz is a small town, which is only accessible by boat (15-20 minutes) from Panajachel or by foot (3.5 hours) from Sololá. We have one road in the town and many trails / paths. Mostly, people walk, but there is a pickup truck, which hauls goods and people up the hill for a small fee.

People are very friendly and respectful. You will need to learn how to say “Buenos días,” “Buenas tardes,” and “Buenos noches,” as everyone uses these expressions with everyone, all of the time.

Question 5:

Will I want to return to the US, once I am in Santa Cruz?

Answer 5:

Most people do return to the US, even though they really don't want to, once they experience the magic of the Lake, the beauty of the environment, and the friendliness of the people. Our students always want to come back to Santa Cruz. It is a place that grabs you and won't you let go.

Travel Tips

Question 1:

Do you have any travel tips?

Answer 1:

Yes. Click on the following link:

http://www.mayanmedicalaid.org/travel_info.htm

Question 2:

Is travel to exciting locations feasible during the weekends? Or should one plan on staying longer to travel?

Answer 2:

It depends. We have had students travel to Tikal, Livingston, Belize, the Alta Verapaz waterfalls and pools, and Rio Dulce on the weekends. We sometimes vary our teaching schedule to accommodate them (i.e., canceling and re-scheduling a class on a Monday or Friday).

Trips done in this manner, however, are quick and much of the time is spent traveling. Our opinion is that it is better to take more time. But that decision is really a matter of preference.

Closer to Santa Cruz is Antigua, the San Pedro volcano, the Pacaya volcano, Monterrico, Chichicastenango, and the beaches of El Salvador. These hot spots are better for weekend trips.

Question 3:

Is travel easy and affordable? And is it normally by bus, boat, or plane?

Answer 3:

Travel is easy and affordable. And depending on where you want to go and how much money you want to spend, the transportation is by bus, boat, and plane. To get to Livingston, for example, you need to travel by bus, then boat. To get to Tikal and the rest of the Peten, you can travel by bus or plane, then shuttle.