

DUKEENGAGE MIAMI, FL

Strengthening immigrant communities by promoting social and legal justice

Dates: May 25 - July 21, 2019

(Dates subject to change up until the point of departure.)

Service Themes

- Immigration & Refugees
- Human Rights & Civil Liberties
- Community Development & Outreach
- Public Policy

Program Focus

Empowering immigrant communities, with a focus on social justice, legal advocacy, human rights education and awareness, and policy implementation.

Curricular Connections: While all students are welcome to apply, this program may be of particular interest to students exploring Law, languages, Public Policy, Political Science, International Studies, or Human Rights. It will also be of interest to those studying Latin American and Caribbean populations or Latinx individuals in the US. (See below for additional details about connecting this program to your academic work.)

Program Leader

- Jacques Pierre, Lecturing Fellow in Haitian Creole and French (Romance Studies). Jacques is the co-director of the Haiti Lab in the Franklin Humanities Institute. His research interests include forms of Haitian Creole in Haitian movies, and literary translation in the context of a less translated language.

Program Overview

During their two months in Miami, students will work with nonprofit organizations that provide services to the multi-ethnic Miami-Dade area, a county with a 46 percent foreign-born population. The nonprofits with which students work provide legal support and advocacy for immigrant and non-immigrant youth and adults on immigration and refugee claims, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and housing issues.

The Miami site was chosen because of its diverse immigrant communities. Now in its 4th year, the program is subtitled “The Many Faces of Miami.” By this we refer to all of the following: Miami as a U.S. city nicknamed “the capital of Latin America;” Miami as one of the highest-percentage-Spanish-speaking cities in the U.S.; Miami as home to several distinct waves of Cuban-American immigrants; Haitian-American immigrants; Miami more recently as a global city, flavored by immigration from Latin America as a whole and from the Caribbean specifically; Miami as socioeconomically diverse; Miami as a Duke alumni home and network; Miami as a place of interesting politics, art, cuisine, and culture as well as exciting international entrepreneurship and law. Throughout our program, we will explore and reflect on these many faces together.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Students will:

- Broaden their perspectives on diversity, legal, and public policy issues
- Improve interpersonal skills, which are increasingly viewed as important in achieving success in professional and personal spheres

- Develop civic responsibility through active community involvement
- Become comfortable working with cultures other than their own

Partnership Opportunities

Service opportunities focus on empowering immigrants and low-income residents of Miami. Each summer the work changes depending on the needs of the organizations and the language abilities of the students. Students who are able to speak Spanish, Haitian Creole, or French generally gain more direct access to clients, but English speakers are also able to contribute with other skills. Recent students have worked with the following organizations:

- **Catholic Charities Legal Services:** Students have worked directly with lawyers and support staff, representing low-income immigrants, managing exile and refugee cases, and assisting clients to gain access to social services. Students have prepared country profiles, performed intake interviews, translated documents, interpreted for lawyers, visited detention centers, staffed the help desk at immigration court, prepared and delivered documents to court, and assisted with grant writing.
- **Americans for Immigrant Justice** is an organization that requires a bilingual student since the partnership includes performing interviews with detainees at detention centers and assisting lawyers with tasks that require advanced language skills.
- **Legal Services of Greater Miami:** Students have focused on defending tenants' housing rights. This project entailed visits to mobile home parks, distribution of documents explaining court actions and tenants' rights, assisting lawyers at HOA meetings, and preparing reports.
- **Dade County Legal Aid:** Students have assisted in the recruitment of pro bono lawyers, the creation of newsletters, and the management of social media. Depending upon the placement, students may work with families and adults in a variety of contexts including social services, housing, and legal representation.

After receiving details of all placement opportunities for this particular summer, students will submit a resume and a list of preferences for placements, which will be reviewed by the Program Directors and the community partners. Skype interviews with community partners may also be utilized to determine final placements. Students will be matched with organizations based on interest, skills, and previous experience and should be open to any placement in the program. Students will work 35-40 hours per week, typically from 9am-5pm, in an office environment, though some placements, e.g., Legal Service of Greater Miami, might include canvassing in mobile home communities.

Program Requirements

Language: Second language proficiency is very beneficial though not required. Preference will be given to students with intermediate to advanced Spanish or Haitian Creole and French.

Coursework: Preference will be given to students who have taken courses related to immigration, Latino/a or Latin American & Caribbean Studies, languages mentioned above, cultural competency, public policy, law, human rights, social justice, or political science.

Other: Depending on the placement, social media skills, experience with low-income and/or immigrant communities, and previous civic engagement work are desirable.

Personal Qualities: We are looking for students with the following competencies.

- **Cooperative:** Since students will be working with a lot of people they have never met before, it's important they know how to cooperate with others to get the work done (team effort).
- **Patience:** This is the key for people to adapt to a different climate as well as a different work environment, especially in an area where people may speak Spanish more than English.
- **Communicative skills:** The capacity to work things out with others respectfully.
- **Responsible:** Be responsible to get the task assigned to you well done. Be on time and a full participant in all scheduled events.
- **Motivation:** Students should be ready to take initiative, going above and beyond the tasks assigned to them.

Curricular Connections

Please see “Course Requirements” above. This program will be of special interest to students curious about law, languages, public policy, political science, international studies, or human rights. Students will learn about Latin American and Caribbean populations and Latinxs in the U.S. In addition, the following departments may offer courses applicable to your studies before and/or after participating in DukeEngage-Miami:

- African and African American Studies
- Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies
- Cultural Anthropology
- English
- Ethics
- History
- International Comparative Studies
- Linguistics
- Political Science
- Program of Latino/a Studies in the Global South
- Public Policy
- Romance Studies
- Sociology

Program Details

Description of Community: Nicknamed the “Capital of Latin America,” Miami is a global city and leader in finance, commerce, culture, media, entertainment, arts, and international trade, but also faces the challenges of great socio-economic inequities. Miami is the second-largest U.S. city with a Spanish-speaking majority, and the largest city with a Cuban-American plurality. More recently, the majority of migrants have been arriving from Colombia, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Peru, and Venezuela.

Students will be immersed in Miami during their service work and will interact with a variety of ethnic groups, mainly individuals who are economically disadvantaged. To gain a better understanding of the Greater Miami area, students will explore different ethnic neighborhoods and meet with a variety of guest speakers, including authors, artists, and Duke alumni.

Housing and Meals: Students will live in dormitories on the University of Miami campus. Students will share double rooms with air conditioning and wi-fi. The University of Miami is located in Coral Gables, a residential and business district located six miles south of downtown Miami. Students will be provided a stipend for groceries and meals. Also, two mini-fridges and two microwaves will be at the students’ disposal for preparing simple meals.

If you do not eat certain types of food for cultural, religious or personal reasons, please contact the DukeEngage office, dukeengage@duke.edu, to discuss whether or not your dietary needs can be reasonably accommodated at this program site.

Transportation: DukeEngage provides or arranges transportation to and from service placements and all scheduled program activities. In Miami, students will utilize public transportation (MetroRail or MetroBus). An unlimited transit pass will be provided. Transport for some group activities will be by van.

Communication: We assume all students will have a personal cell phone for program-related and emergency communication. Internet access is available in the dorm rooms.

Local Safety and Security; Cultural Norms, Mores and Practices: DukeEngage strongly advises all applicants to familiarize themselves with the challenges travelers commonly encounter at this program site in order to make an informed application decision. We recommend starting with the [Diversity, Identity and Global Travel section](#) of the DukeEngage website.

Opportunities for Reflection: Reflection sessions will take place once a week through readings, conversations and activities coordinated by the program leaders. Students will also be required to reflect through public blog postings. Reflections will be based on experiences with the community partners, cultural enhancement activities and required readings.

Other Opportunities: Some cultural enrichment activities will take place on evenings and weekends, and reflection sessions will likely be held on Sunday evenings. Students will have some evening and weekend time for individual personal and social activities. There are opportunities to interact with the local community and Duke alumni, both with the group and individually. Open water swimming will not be a sponsored activity in any DukeEngage program.

More Information

Articles:

- [In Miami, Cuban Culture, No Passport Required](#) (New York Times)
- [Little Haiti and Beyond: A Culinary Community in Miami](#) (Museum of Food & Drink)
- ['There's a lot of fear and anxiety': Miami's Haitians hit by threat of deportation](#) (The Guardian)

Relevant books:

- *Miami: Mistress of the Americas* by Jan Nijman
- *Miami Babylon* by Gerald Posner
- *Havana USA* by Maria Cristina Garcia
- *Cuba Confidential* by Ann Louise Bardach
- *How to Leave Hialeah* by Jennine Capo Crucet
- [*The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*](#) by Juno Diaz
- [*Brother, I'm Dying*](#) by Edwidge Danticat

Students will complete required readings as part of the preparation for the program, and additional readings may be selected for summer reflection, book-club style.