

The following is a list of suggestions for small-scale and large-scale changes or modifications to the 2020 UO Bolivia study abroad program, offered by SIREJ members:

Small scale:

- **Spanish language help** (greetings, vocabulary, directions, descriptors– anything for basic communications or instructions that would help those who are still new to the language. We acknowledge that those in our group that were less confident in Spanish still learned a lot pretty quickly, and also that such immersive learning experiences are valuable, but we believe that a small amount of basic Spanish would ease some dependency on guides, fellow students, and professors that we noticed in the first week or so of our time in Bolivia). An option is to give students printed “cheat-sheets”– small pieces of paper/notecards that contain the basics as suggested above. However, it is valid that distributing notecards could create dependency on said notecards and remove the productive pressure to learn Spanish through immersion. **SIREJ is willing to help with this- see below*
- **More defined academic expectations pre-departure** (e.g. more information on what is expected for the research paper, course readings, summaries, who is leading what class/topic).
- **More defined “roles”** for positions such as camera crew/ GoPro carrier (see “team” section in “Big-scale” section)
- **Team-building exercises/conflict management discussions pre-departure** (ex: taking conflict management style test, 16 personality test, taking a hike together, etc.)
- **Briefing/orientation on communication and social etiquette**
- **Briefing on area’s history/culture/customs** before departure (especially before first location)
- **Encouragement to read articles before arrival** (this could look like the readings being published a month or so before the trip; also, this can connect with the “More defined academic expectations” bullet point.
- **Food guide:** more of a description of what food will be like and what students w/ eating restrictions can expect
- **LifeStraw bottles instead of water bottles** (cheaper, better for the environment, etc)
- **First Aid** supply in case of emergencies (severe allergic reactions, stomach issues, etc.)
- **Proper disease prevention and awareness** (ticks!)
- More detailed descriptions of physical activities- hiking vs. city events, etc. - so that **students can know to bring** street clothes and outdoor clothes, etc.
- **First Aid supply** in case of emergencies and info on possible illnesses (severe allergic reactions, stomach issues, etc.)/ student First Aid training
- Giving students LifeStraw bottles/water filters instead of using plastic water bottles
- **Try to create less waste/garbage, especially plastic** (see above)

Big scale: (ideas that we know would take serious change, coordination, and resources to make happen. We respect that these are just suggestions and may not be possible logistically, and also that many complex factors affect these ideas,.)

- **female faculty member** (possibly one fluent in Spanish, as to release translating duty from the professors - see note about translator later in this section)
- **Bolivian indigenous student inclusion**
- **multiple male students**, not just one as in the 2019 year
- **the ability for alumni to come/participate/work** as advisors or helpers
- more of an emphasis on a **team dynamic**, with the group formatted and purposely directed to function more as a team, with specific people filling specific roles (e.g. camera crew, etc.). This would probably take some meeting before departure to really work, but could pay off in team efficiency and dynamics.
- **Vetting industries that we participate in/support, possibly by SIREJ** (ex: the Jaguar Conservation ranch and the way that we supported a white, mestizo cattle rancher)
- **Possibly a professional translator** (or just having someone along who would want to do that)
- Better organization/planning of community activities/interactions
- More integration of students' skills with community activities/ more planning with the communities to use skills the students have to offer.

The following is a list of projects and/or objectives related to the 2020 UO Bolivia study abroad program that SIREJ members would be willing to help coordinate, lead, or otherwise participate in:

- Orientation:
this can be area history, "what to expect" talks, personal stories, etc.
- helping teach basic Spanish (see above)
- sharing experiences for people considering or accepted to the program
- leading discussions (in Bolivia or pre-departure) for classes/ discussing readings
- raising money to support alumni travelling with the group
- training camera crew/specific positions
- (in Bolivia) being conflict resolution leads if needed