ITINERARY

Wednesday, July 25, 2012
Orientation
We will arrive at Guatemala City’s international airport, La Aurora, and travel together via shuttle to Antigua where we begin our journey. Upon arrival in our hotel, the Posada de Don Rodrigo, we will relax and meet for an orientation dinner at 7:00 PM in the hotel restaurant.

Thursday, July 26, 2012
Curriculum Development – Antigua
In the morning we will walk the short distance to Casa Herrera where we will have our first meeting on curriculum development. Casa Herrera is owned and operated by the University of Texas at Austin and Fundación Pantaleón; it serves as both a research facility and meeting space for archaeologists and anthropologists in the field. We will get to use the space to work on our own curriculum development throughout the trip. After lunch within walking distance, we will spend the afternoon touring the beautiful city of Antigua.

Friday, July 27, 2012
Iximche – Lake Atitlan
In the morning we will pack up and go visit the pre-colonial archaeological site of Iximche, the capital of the Kakchiquel Maya group which fell to the Spanish conquerors in 1524. The site’s remains are in a pine forest characteristic of the Guatemalan highlands. There we will see a Maya temple and ball court that are part of the ceremonial center of the ancient city. A special Mayan ceremony will be held for us at this site. We stop for lunch in Tecpan, about 2 miles from Iximche, and then travel to Lake Atitlan, one of the most beautiful scenes in the world, surrounded by three volcanoes: San Pedro, Atitlan and Toliman. In fact, this large highland lake was formed from volcanic eruptions. While at Lake Atitlan, we will be staying at the Posada de Don Rodrigo, Panajachel, the sister hotel to our “home” in Antigua.

Saturday, July 28, 2012
San Pedro
We will venture onto the lake with a boat trip to the town of San Pedro, another community on the shores of Lake Atitlan. (There is no road that encircles the lake, plus a trip on the water will afford us more views of the beautiful scenery!) In less-discovered San Pedro, we will meet with a weaving collective and learn more about the unique weaving collective they have formed to make a living.

Sunday, July 29, 2012
Chichicástenango
We will tour our way back to Antigua today. Along the way we will visit the famous market of Chichicástenango, the center of K’iche’ Maya culture. Gorgeous scenery unfolds this morning as we ascend from the central valley into the Guatemala highlands. We will drive by friendly Indian villages where crops are still hand-tilled and grown on impossibly steep hillside terraces. We will enjoy lunch in the peaceful highlands before immersing ourselves in the colorful pageantry of Chichicástenango, where we can shop for elaborately carved dance masks and
richly embroidered hand weavings. We will visit Santo Tomas Church where rose petals and candles cover the floor and copal incense fills the air. Here Mayan and Catholic rituals are blended together. At the end of the day we will be back in Antigua at the Posada de Don Rodrigo.

Monday, July 30, 2012
Antigua
Today we have left open for participants to explore the city as they wish in order to focus on their own individual interests and take advantage of some down time. Lunch is on your own and we will meet for dinner.

Tuesday, July 31, 2012
School Visit
We will travel to Chimaltenango where we will get the special opportunity to visit a Guatemalan primary school where lessons are conducted in both Spanish and Maya, encouraging proficiency in both languages.

Wednesday, August 1, 2012
Tikal
Today we will need to get a very early start from Antigua to Guatemala City to catch a flight that leaves at 6:45am. The early morning trip has been worth it when we arrive in Flores, the town adjacent to the truly breathtaking ancient Maya site of Tikal. We will spend part of the day exploring the magnificent achievements of these fascinating ancient people. At its height Tikal was home to over 100,000 Maya and was a cultural and political center. Howler monkeys, spider monkeys, and coati mundi are frequently seen at Tikal National Park, and the more elusive jaguar and ocelot are also known to survive in this protected rainforest reserve. Almost 300 species of birds have been identified in Tikal including toucans, motmots, and parrots. We will spend tonight in the park at the Jaguar Inn, one of only three hotels in the National Park and only 1 kilometer from Tikal’s Grand Plaza.

Thursday, August 2, 2012
Tikal
This morning is a free morning inside Tikal National Park. One popular option is to watch the sun rise from one of the pyramids at the site. We will leave the park at 1:45pm to catch our flight from Flores leaves at 4:40 pm and arrives in Guatemala City at 5:30pm. We will spend the night at the Westin Camino Real in Guatemala City.

Friday, August 3, 2012
Guatemala City
The group will convene in the morning for a group breakfast and end to our trip. We end our program at breakfast. Participants will be taken from the hotel to the airport depending on their flight schedule.