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Fall 2009

### Lynette Hamlin, Associate Professor and Chair, Nursing, travels to Mexico

Lynette Hamlin

*University of New Hampshire - Main Campus*

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#### Recommended Citation

Hamlin, Lynette, "Lynette Hamlin, Associate Professor and Chair, Nursing, travels to Mexico" (2009).  
*Faculty Travel Reports*. 41.

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## Lynette Hamlin

Associate Professor and Chair, Nursing - College of Health and Human Services

Professor Lynette Hamlin traveled to Mexico in March with a group of students to initiate a new cross-cultural nursing program.



First participants in the new nursing exchange program with the University of Guanajuato in Mexico.

The nursing program has launched an exciting new program this semester. It is NURS 794/894: Special Topics: Cross-Cultural Nursing in Mexico. This course introduced 17 nursing students to transnational health issues through international student and faculty exchange with the University of Guanajuato and the University of New Hampshire nursing departments. Students had the opportunity to critically examine the interaction of culture, race, geography, economics, and political environments and their impact on the health of the citizens of Mexico. Communication strategies to promote cross-cultural understanding were stressed. Course objectives include:

- Compare and contrast similarities and differences of nursing practice in Mexico and the U.S.
- Develop skills to provide culturally competent care.
- Develop, implement, and evaluate a cross-culturally service learning project.
- Learn about the health care system in Mexico.
- Develop Spanish speaking skills.

This year's students were the trailblazers and the experience met our expectations beyond what could have been anticipated. We traveled to Celaya, Mexico, March 10 through March 23, 2009. Three faculty precepted 17 nursing students who had clinical experiences in labor and birth, community health, psychiatric mental health, pediatric oncology, and general adult health. Students were also able to participate in nursing classes with our University of Guanajuato student colleagues and one group of UNH students presented two classes on therapeutic communication skills – translated to Spanish. I precepted students in labor and birth and, across five days in the clinical setting, students were able to participate in more than 20 births – one day we assisted with 10 births in six hours! Sophomore to senior nursing students were able to learn new clinical skills, practice current skills, and observe significant differences in care across cultures.

Student feedback has been very positive and students and faculty both experience the growth of our future nurses as a result of this experience. Our colleagues from the University of Guanajuato plan to visit us October 2009 and we are planning for our return visit March 2010.



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